

Howe appeals for loyalty

Heseltine in new pledge on Thatcher

By Philip Webster and Robin Oakley

THE PRIME Minister will lead the Conservatives into the next election and win it, Mr Michael Heseltine predicted last night.

The former Cabinet minister declared that no one had done more than he to support the election of Mrs Thatcher's three governments, and no one would strive harder to secure a fourth term. But his declaration fell short of a personal endorsement for the Prime Minister.

Mr Heseltine's unexpected intervention in the growing speculation about the Conservative Party leadership in the wake of the Mid Staffordshire by-election defeat last Thursday and a welter of adverse opinion polls came after an appeal from Sir Geoffrey Howe that he should declare his support for Mrs Thatcher.

At the same time, senior ministers predicted privately that Mr Heseltine's emergence as the favourite to succeed her would strengthen her resolve to stay on and fight the next election. "She will never hand the party over to Michael," a senior Cabinet source said.

Another minister, Mr Michael Howard, issued a veiled criticism of Mr Heseltine when he warned of the dangers of the Government adopting a more interventionist approach.

The Secretary of State for Employment had Mr Heseltine clearly in his sights when he told the Adam Smith Institute that those who proclaimed their adherence to the

free market but in reality "itch to pull levers and throw switches to intervene" would all too easily succumb to each successive call to interfere.

Mr Heseltine's carefully-drafted 160-word statement was issued after talks with allies at Westminster.

It said: "No one did more to support the election of Mrs Thatcher's first government when I launched the first privatization programme of council houses sales. No one did more to support the election of Mrs Thatcher's second government when as Secretary of State for Defence I led the battle against CND."

"No one did more as a backbencher to support the election of Mrs Thatcher's third government when I spoke in 108 constituencies."

"I have repeatedly said I believe Mrs Thatcher will lead the Conservative Party into the next election and that the Conservative Party will win it. If I am proved right in those forecasts, my colleagues know so too will strive harder to secure a fourth term of Conservative government."

The absence in the statement of any praise for Mrs Thatcher was noted at Westminster last night but caused little surprise, given their known differences and the fact that he did not vote for her in the leadership election last autumn, but it was seen as an attempt to calm the feverish speculation about his intentions.

Although Mr Heseltine has never disguised his political ambitions, he is anxious to avoid charges of splitting the party. It was noted last night that he had mentioned Mrs Thatcher by name several times in his statement, something he has been accused by opponents of failing to do in the past.

Earlier, his allies had insisted that Mr Heseltine had always been loyal to the Government and had nothing for which to apologize. However, Sir Geoffrey's surprise intervention made it inevitable that he would have to say something.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Sir Geoffrey said: "I would like to see Mr Heseltine doing what we are all doing, which is support the present Government going through the manifest difficulty of securing the acceptance of the change to the community charge and applying the right policies to the reconquest effectively of inflation to suit."

tain the very important progress we have made over the last 10 years."

Asked whether Mr Heseltine should stand up and declare openly that he supported Mrs Thatcher, Sir Geoffrey replied: "I think that is right, yes."

Several Conservative MPs had hoped to hear from Mr Heseltine last night that he was available to serve again in the Government. There have been calls for him to be made party chairman to replace Mr Kenneth Baker, who yesterday had a 45-minute meeting with the Prime Minister to discuss strategy.

Afterwards, Mrs Thatcher's confidence in Mr Baker was made plain and it was emphasized there would be no change in the chairmanship.

Senior Cabinet ministers maintained yesterday that the air of crisis surrounding the Government had been fed by the media. They are braced for continuing difficulties up to and beyond the May local elections, but expect a much quieter parliamentary timetable in June and July—a time when Conservative MPs have proved restless in the past—to ease the pressure on the Government. But there is a growing acceptance that the next general election cannot take place until the autumn of 1991 at the earliest.

Senior ministers are also determined that Conservative MPs should be brought fully into the re-assessment of the community charge, that is, to follow this year's painful introduction. Party strategists are concerned that MPs are showing less coolness under fire than activists in the country. One way of tackling this will be to improve consultation.

Tory divisions, page 12



Lawson warning on delayed ERM entry

By Philip Webster, Chief Political Correspondent

MR NIGEL LAWSON yesterday intensified the pressure on the Prime Minister to agree to early entry into the exchange rate mechanism of the European Monetary System, warning that the Government's commitment against inflation was at risk.

The former Chancellor of the Exchequer described Britain's non-membership as "an exposed flank" and suggested the timetable envisaged by the Government might be "too leisurely for the circumstances in which we find ourselves."

Mr John Major, the Chancellor, said in the Budget

speech last week that the conditions for joining the ERM stood, remarks which gave the impression that Britain might join next year.

Mr Lawson's differences with Mrs Margaret Thatcher on the EMS led to his departure from office last October.

In the Budget debate yesterday he said Conservative policies had brought unparalleled improvements. That would continue only if the exposed flank was protected, which meant early entry.

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Tear gas breaks up Sharpeville protest



African demonstrators fleeing tear gas fired by police at an illegal march in protest against conditions in Sharpeville yesterday

Deaths threaten Pretoria talks

From Gavin Bell Johannesburg

NEGOTIATIONS between the South African Government and the African National Congress have been jeopardized by yesterday's clashes between police and huge crowds of demonstrators, in which at least two people died and about 300 were injured, and guerrilla attacks in black townships.

Most of the casualties were in Sobokeng, south of the city, which resembled a battlefield after police opened fire with shotguns on tens of thousands of people protesting against high rents and racially segregated town councils. The order to fire was given by senior officers at the scene when the crowd ignored a judicial ban on the demonstration.

At one point panic-stricken blacks stumbled over the bodies of others hit by birdshot and rubber bullets in their haste to flee. Hospital workers said most of the casualties had been shot in the back.

An interim police report late yesterday said: "The situation is volatile, with police coming under constant attack, mainly by stone-throwing mobs. It is impossible to furnish reliable casualty figures, but we can confirm a number of people injured, including two policemen."

Guerrillas meanwhile attacked council offices in Soweto and a nearby power station with rocket-propelled grenades and limpet mines, but nobody was injured.

Mr Adrian Vlok, the Minister of Law and Order, appealed for calm after touring the trouble spots, which included Sharpeville. He expressed particular concern about white vigilante groups being formed in the Orange Free State town of Welkom, and reports of blacks being beaten with whips and clubs.

"This can be very dangerous, and will solve nothing," he said. "It can only lead to further problems, so I would request the public to allow the police and security forces to deal with the situation."

Protest deaths, page 11

Bush warns against force in Lithuania

From Mary Dejevsky, Moscow, and Anatol Lieven, Vilnius

PRESIDENT Bush has warned the Soviet leader that all opportunities for future co-operation with the United States will be jeopardized if Moscow uses force in Lithuania. The warning, later repeated in Washington by Mr Martin Fitzwater, the White House spokesman, was conveyed by Senator Edward Kennedy in a 90-minute meeting with President Gorbachev in the Kremlin yesterday.

According to the senator, who is making what is technically a private visit to Moscow, Mr Gorbachev had reiterated his commitment to resolve the situation in Lithuania peacefully and in accordance with the Soviet Constitution.

He was said to have qualified his assurances for the first time, however, by indicating that force might be used "if lives were threatened". There has been speculation that the Soviet leadership could use a real or imagined threat to the safety of ethnic Russians in the republic as a pretext for all-out military intervention.

Mr Kennedy said his discussion with Mr Gorbachev had been dominated by

Lithuania and that the Soviet leader had set out the areas of conflict between Moscow and Lithuania in detail.

He denied that he had been entrusted with any special message by the US Administration, but said he had met President Bush immediately before coming to Moscow and that the President had made clear his views on Lithuania.

Mr Kennedy said he was optimistic the opportunities for co-operation with the Soviet Union "not only in arms control, but in economic affairs and human rights"

would not be lost. But he said the world's perception of President Gorbachev would be undermined by the use of force. It would "also hinder in an important and significant way a number of potential opportunities in the areas of trade, arms control and scientific and technical exchanges".

Meanwhile, the outcome of talks between the Lithuanian leadership of President Landsbergis and Soviet officers in Vilnius yesterday was initially reported to be an agreement that no further action would be taken without consultation.

However, President Landsbergis said later: "We have not received clear assurances about which buildings might be occupied in future or that movement of troops will be notified in advance to enable us to calm down our people."

Foreign journalists based in Moscow were still prevented from travelling to Vilnius yesterday, but those already there were not being required to leave.

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Treaties on line, page 8
John Grigg, page 12
Leading article, page 13

Bishop drops out of race

By Clifford Longley Religious Affairs Editor

THE BISHOP of Oxford, one of the most favoured candidates to succeed the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, disowned any ambition in the matter yesterday.

Bishop Richard Harries, who is no stranger to Lambeth Palace as one of Dr Runcie's speech-writers, said: "I don't want the job, and I don't think it's appropriate for me or any other bishop to speculate on it."

Dr Runcie announced on Sunday that he was retiring from the end of next January, which started the process for selecting a successor.

None of the other possible contenders entered the lists yesterday, though recent remarks from the Archbishop of Armagh, Dr Robert Eames, were taken as a clear hint of his hopes.

Asked on a radio programme last week about succeeding Dr Runcie, he said: "It is not for anyone to say."

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Legal action, page 6

Ministers face new tax anger

By Nicholas Wood, Political Correspondent

MINISTERS were last night bracing themselves for renewed backbench Tory protests over the implementation of the community charge.

MPs were due to vote on a Labour resolution rejecting the Government's plans to cushion the introduction of the poll tax through transitional relief worth £810 million over three years.

Labour engineered the 90-minute late-night debate not to wreck the scheme but to highlight ministers' difficulties over the reform. A number of Tory MPs seeking more generous subsidies were expected to rebel against the Government.

The three-year transitional relief scheme is aimed at helping people living in low-

rated property faced with a sharp rise in payments after the switch from rates to the community charge. It is intended to ensure that increases are held to no more than £3 a week.

However, the additional help is available only up to the notional poll tax determined in Whitehall for local authorities and does not cover community charges exceeding this amount.

Because so many councils are spending well above the Government's targets, many people will find that their bills will rise by much more than the theoretical maximum of £156 a year.

Nurses' anger, page 2
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we're not perfect.
just a vast
improvement.

Appliance of science to the Dead Sea Scrolls

By Norman Hammond Archaeology Correspondent

THE DEAD Sea Scrolls, one of the greatest surviving archives of the Holy Land, are soon to be carbon-dated, more than 40 years after their discovery in desert caves in Palestine.

The dating process will, it is hoped, help settle a dispute among scholars that places the scrolls at two different times nearly four centuries apart.

Since the scrolls include the earliest known texts of some of the books of the Bible, the dating process, and its resolution, will prove to be of interest to Christians, Muslims and Jews alike, and may settle the question of whether the Essenes, a mysterious sect living in ancient Palestine, held "Christian" beliefs centuries before the birth of Christ.

Nearly 800 papyrus and leather

scrolls have survived, and Mr Magen Broshi, a custodian of the Shrine of the Book at the Israel Museum, where some of the documents are on display, said at least a dozen would be dated.

Some experts believe they were written after the birth of Christ by his early followers in Palestine. But the majority of biblical scholars believe that the scrolls dated to the second or third century BC and were written by the esoteric Essene sect. Mr Broshi, however, said this assessment was based on a study of ancient handwriting styles and not on any independent scientific method. "We will now see if physics agrees with this," he said.

Professor Geza Vermes, a professor of Jewish Studies at Oxford University, said yesterday that it was believed that the scrolls were a collection of documents hidden in about AD 66 to 70 during the first

large Jewish revolution against the Romans.

"I would greatly welcome any greater precision in dating these scrolls," said Professor Vermes. "However, the carbon-dating will not necessarily solve the problem once and for all because the documents were compiled over centuries, most written in 300 BC and others only completed in the first century AD."

The dating has been thought necessary because of the claim by critics, such as Professor Robert Eisenman, of California State University, that the unpublished scrolls were the product of early Christian groups. Professor Eisenman and his colleagues believe that certain phrases commonly used in the early Church, together with what they interpret as cryptic references to Herod the Great, who lived in the first century BC,

prove the later dating. Although none of the scrolls has been carbon-dated before, part of the linen wrappings of one was dated more than 30 years ago. It gave an age of AD 33 plus or minus 200 years, too imprecise to be of use.

The new investigation will employ a technique known as accelerator mass spectrometry (AMS), in which the remaining atoms of carbon-14 are counted directly.

The method will require a piece of parchment only the size of a postage stamp and may give a result accurate to within 50 years. The Israel Antiquities Authority expects work to begin at a laboratory in Europe within the coming weeks.

In Switzerland, Professor Willy Wocilfi, of the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, said he would be prepared to date the scrolls so long as he could direct the operation.

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Bottomley fails to defuse nurses' protest

By Jill Sherman, Social Services Correspondent

NURSES demanding poll tax rebates for all nursing students gave Mrs Virginia Bottomley, the Minister for Health, an angry reception at their annual congress in Brighton yesterday.

They booed and hissed throughout Mrs Bottomley's speech as she refused to give assurances on key issues of concern.

The Royal College of Nursing has been pressing the Government to extend the 80 per cent poll tax rebate for the 2,000 students on Project 2000 training courses to all 60,000 nursing students.

Miss Linda Bailey, a nursing student from Lambeth, south London, said she would have to pay £580 a year in poll tax. "Why should the majority of student nurses have to pay 100 per cent of the charge when trainees in the armed forces who are earning over £9,500 a year pay only 20 per cent?" she demanded. A first-year student nurse working outside London earns £5,695.

Mrs Bottomley insisted that salaried student nurses, apart from those on the Project 2000 courses being implemented in 16 districts, would be treated like any other salaried health authority staff. Students in London would receive an 11 per cent increase by the end of the year and a 28 per cent rise this year in London waiting.

There was no relevance in a comparison with the armed forces, who had a different employer, she said.

Earlier, Miss Maude Storey, the college president, claimed the poll tax was anomalous, divisive and short-sighted. It was divisive because it set one class of nursing student apart from the other. "It is short-sighted because it acts as another entirely avoidable deterrent to recruitment into nursing," she said.

Schools of nursing had reported that students have been checking the local community charge rate applying for a place. Miss Storey said. The viability of courses in high poll tax areas would be threatened.

Mrs Bottomley was also pressed to set up a national inspectorate to monitor and set standards in both health and local authority services. However, again she made it evident that the Government was not planning such a move. "There are other ways of achieving equality than having an inspectorate which would be yet another body and yet another organization," she said.

Quality would be specified in the contracts to be drawn up between health authorities and hospitals from next April. Much of Mrs Bottomley's speech was devoted to praising nurses on their achievements and their hard work, but her comments were regarded as patronizing. "She misjudged nurses in terms of believing that her reassurances were all that were needed," Miss Christine Hancock, the college general secretary, said at a press conference later. The minister did touch on the need for more part-time jobs, work break schemes, flexible hours and workplace nurseries to attract both mature entrants and returners. "I believe that the NHS should be a pioneer in the innovative and flexible deployment of staff, especially nurses - and it should be in the vanguard of efforts to support mothers who want to return to work," she said.

However, she did not promise more central funding. There would be no rigid blueprint from the Department of Health and it was up to individual authorities to learn from good practice throughout the country.

This morning the presidents of the Royal Medical Colleges will join the RCN in Brighton to present a statement calling for a staged introduction of the NHS reforms in two regions to see if they work.

The Royal colleges will be pressing Conservative peers to back an amendment in the NHS and Community Care Bill urging for a formal evaluation of the changes which are due to be implemented nationally from next April.

The colleges argue there is no evidence that the changes, which include self-governing hospitals, GP practice budgets and an internal market in health care, will improve patient care.

This request, however, met with little sympathy from Mrs Bottomley yesterday. "It would be quite wrong now to delay the implementation of the Bill. Uncertainty is antithetical to confidence." In order to maintain confidence



Mrs Bottomley and Miss Linda Bailey, a student nurse from Lambeth worried at the prospect of a £580 poll tax bill

it was important to proceed with all speed with the changes.

Artists Against the Poll Tax, featuring rock bands, disc jockeys, comedians and other entertainers, was launched at the House of Commons by the Labour MP Mr David Nellist yesterday.

However, most of the artists expected failed to appear at the 11am press conference. Mr Philip Green, the organizer, blamed the showbusiness habit of late rising and the clocks going forward.

Fathers who leave children must pay

By Nicholas Wood

MEASURES intended to make fathers who abandon children meet financial obligations were announced by the Government yesterday.

They are aimed at helping 500,000 mothers who receive no maintenance payments, at a cost to the taxpayer of £250 million a year.

Under an interim package, the Department of Social Security will be able to claw back from absentee fathers maintenance payments made to mothers as well as to children. Single parents returning to work will no longer have to seek a new maintenance order, and the Department of Social Security will enforce unpaid maintenance orders.

Student fund

THE ALLOWANCE for hardship cases under the Government's student loans proposals is to be doubled to £20 million a year. The "access funds" money will be spent on students hit by the freezing of grants, the introduction of student loans and the abolition of housing benefits.

Raid damages

MR IAN Cudde, a freelance photo-journalist yesterday accepted £15,000 agreed damages in the High Court after suing the Metropolitan Police for damage to his property and the humiliation of a raid on his house in Upper Holloway, north London, in 1985. The police agreed to pay costs.

Supergrass case

A SUPERGRASS with a £250,000 contract on his life was given a 27-month jail sentence by the Central Criminal Court yesterday after helping to trap a gang which smuggled £22 million of cannabis. Robert Westbury, of Christchurch, Dorset, admitted conspiracy to traffic drugs.

Car fire deaths

TWO children aged 19 months and 3 years were burned to death yesterday after the car in which they were sitting in the driveway of a house in Sale, Manchester, caught fire. Two workers who attacked the blaze with an extinguisher were beaten back by the intense heat.

Feet first

Prince Edward walked to and from work yesterday to benefit London's homeless. It is hoped that he and many others who gave their fares or petrol money to Charity Projects "Feet First" campaign will have raised £100,000. The money will go to agencies helping the homeless.

CORRECTION

The first chapter of *Rob Meitzia*, referred to in Rabbi Isaac Bernstein's article, "Spirit of Jewry revived" yesterday is devoted to civil law, not war as printed.

End of the line for junk calls

By David Sapsted

THE DAYS of "junk" telephone calls from double-glazing salesmen, insurance agents and kitchen-equipment suppliers may be numbered.

Proposals to outlaw unsolicited sales calls to individuals in their homes have been submitted to Sir Bryan Carsberg, the director-general of the Office of Telecommunications (OfTel), who is determined to crack down on what the trade describes as "cold calls".

Sir Bryan will be studying proposals this week from the British Direct Marketing Association, the cold-callers' trade association, suggesting that a Telephone Preference Service be set up. Theoretically, it would operate in the same way as the Mail Preference Service, which enables people who do not wish to receive junk mail to have their names taken off mailing lists.

A firm which called a person after he or she had requested otherwise would be liable to have its Branch Systems General Licence - under which all multiple-phone users operate - revoked.

Later this year, the British Direct Marketing Association will also be putting forward proposals to control the growing problem of junk faxes, the unwanted transmissions clogging thousands of offices' facsimile receivers.

Dismissive magistrates 'in error'

By Frances Gibb

MAGISTRATES were warned by the High Court yesterday not to use their power to dismiss cases as a way of punishing the Crown Prosecution Service over "slip ups" in bringing cases to trial.

In a test case mounted by the Director of Public Prosecutions, Lord Justice Mustill, sitting with Mr Justice Schiemann, said: "Justices are there to try cases and not punish prosecuting authorities."

"The public has an interest in ensuring that properly brought prosecutions are properly conducted in court."

The judges allowed the applications for a judicial review, by Mr Allan Green QC, the Director of Public Prosecutions, of decisions made by Swansea magistrates to dismiss two cases.

In February last year the magistrates blocked a prosecution on a criminal damage charge because the principal prosecution witness failed to appear on time. They also dismissed a case because two police witnesses failed to turn up after a mix-up over dates.

Lord Justice Mustill said that the Swansea magistrates had fallen into error in both cases by refusing adjournments. But he refused to quash the acquittals of the defendants, saying it would be unfair for them to face fresh trials because of the long lapse of time since they were charged.

Millions may 'lose' relief on their poll tax payments

By David Walker, Public Administration Correspondent

MILLIONS of people who might have thought they were to be protected by the Government's transitional relief scheme for the poll tax will shortly find out the extent of their mistake.

Even those who get some money out of the scheme may find - on one estimate - that they are worse off by up to £4.50 net a week.

At the Conservative Party conference last autumn, Mr David Hunt, Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, delighted his colleagues by grafting the special relief scheme on poll tax rebates. He appeared to promise that individuals would get £3 a week worse off under poll tax than under the rates would get protection.

In fact, Mr Hunt's qualification - that his calculations applied only if the local authority spends at the officially approved level - renders them academic. Labour's charge that the Government was trying to "bribe" voters may itself turn out to be academic.

According to the Department of the Environment, 7.5 million people in England and Wales, mainly occupants of houses with low rateable values, will qualify under the transitional relief scheme. In addition, the scheme has been opened to pensioners and disabled people who are not themselves ratepayers but are

facing a sharp rise in outlays to their local authority.

However, many people will find the net amount they pay to local government increases. Because their council's poll tax is above the Whitehall-approved level, they get relief only up to a certain point and beyond that have to bear the full costs of the poll tax.

Bristol provides an example. Average rates there this year are £547 a household. The poll tax is £331. A two-person household is thus some £115 worse off. This is less than the £156 threshold, so this household pays its £2.21 extra a week without protection. But Bristol's actual poll tax is £490 a head, which means each household member is £217 a year or over £4 a week worse off.

A spokesman for Labour-



Mr Kevin Coombes: city is risking bankruptcy

controlled Bristol City Council said yesterday that it was concentrating on telling residents about the rebates for poll tax rather than the transitional relief, because few people would benefit from it and mostly by tiny sums.

The Government committed over £800 million to the scheme, over three years.

A faction within the ruling Labour group on Liverpool City Council is threatening to vote against the poll tax figure recommended by its leaders.

Echoing the refusal of Labour councillors to set a rate in 1985, which led to their disqualification and surcharge, rebel councillors may have sufficient votes to prevent the council levying a poll tax at the council meeting scheduled for tomorrow night.

Last night, Ms Joyce Gould, a national Labour Party official, addressed Labour councillors as the council leader, Mr Kevin Coombes, threatened to resign.

Liverpool has set its budget for 1990-91, but has yet to ratify the poll tax figure implied by the budget - £449 per head. It is supposed to do this by March 31.

Among 56 Labour councillors, Mr Coombes faces 21 taking a hard line on the poll tax.

He said: "Without a poll tax in place, Liverpool goes bankrupt on Monday. I cannot stand by and see that happen."

Relief scheme: who is eligible?

MILLIONS of poll tax payers are expected to be eligible for the Government's transitional relief scheme (David Walker writes). However, many are confused about how to work out their entitlements. Here are details of the scheme:

Q. Who benefits from transitional relief?

A. Category One are rate-paying householders in England and Wales (but only two members of any given household) whose "notional" poll tax bill is more than £3 a week in excess of the rates that were paid on the property in the year up to March 31 1990.

Category Two are pensioners and disabled people who do not pay rates but who also face a £3 a week rise in their outlays under poll tax. Spouses of ratepayers are not in their category.

Q. What is the "notional" poll tax?

A. Whitehall says councils need levy no more than is needed to pay for current expenditure plus inflation, calculated at 3.8 per cent. At present inflation is 7.5 per cent.

Q. Do I have to apply?

A. In many cases, councils will apply the relief before sending out bills. It depends on their computer software and their overall efficiency. It is wise to check whether the relief has been given.

Q. What do I get?

A. The answer is in two parts. First, the "official" version, based on a two-adult house-

hold paying £300 in rates this year. The official or "notional" poll tax is £275. This couple, taken together, face an increase in their outlays of £250 (that is £550 in poll tax minus their rates). The Government threshold is £3 a week worse off, that is £156 a year. This couple therefore qualify for £94 in relief, of £47 each. Their poll tax is thus cut from £275 to £228 each.

However, next comes the "unofficial" part. Instead of poll tax being set at the notional level, what happens if it is actually £400? Well, instead of paying £228, each member of this household has to pay an additional £172. Compared with rates, each is £150 a year or £2.80 a week worse off. They have had their protection, in other words, and are still worse off.

Q. What happens if I move house?

A. There will be no protection for those who have no connection with a property that was rated and who become liable for the poll tax after April 1 1990 - unless they fit into Category Two above.

Q. How long will protection be offered?

A. For three financial years, that is until the end of March 1993.

Q. What about community charge rebates?

A. Transitional relief stands on its own. Eligibility for it and payments under it do not affect eligibility for rebates.

Ministers set out to solve problems facing homeless

By John Lewis, Political Staff

THE GOVERNMENT will today take the first steps to deal with the thousands of young people living rough in cities.

Mr Michael Spicer, Minister for Housing and Planning, is to announce an extra £148 million to be spent on the homeless in the coming financial year, starting next month, with a further £102 million next year.

Most of the money, £112 million for local authorities and £36 million for housing associations, will go on renovating empty, run-down council housing to take the homeless. There will also be some hostel accommodation for single people.

There are about 125,000 "statutory" homeless in Britain, whom councils have to house. About 38,000 are in temporary accommodation, invariably bed and breakfast.

Mr Spicer is hoping to cut the number of homeless in

temporary housing by 15,000 over the next two years.

This should free bed and breakfast accommodation for the "non-statutory" homeless living in "cardboard cities" or shop doorways.

Mr Spicer said: "The schemes we have looked at favourably are those which bring existing property, thought to be sub-standard, back into use, but the money can be used for new buildings and hostels as well."

Ministers believe that they have an answer to the "statutory" problem. The "non-statutory" problem, however, is growing, with several thousand young people thought to be living rough in London alone.

Mr Spicer said that the problem was common to many cities in the rest of Europe and in the United States.

A primary cause is thought to be the same as for the statutory homeless: the break-

up of marriages and the alienation of children in care. Another cause is believed to be young people, some as young as 13, with what Mr Spicer called "a misplaced sense of independence."

He said: "People arrive in London thinking they have the bright lights in front of them, when, in fact, it can be extremely dangerous."

It is, however, not simply a question of providing hostel-type accommodation. For one thing, there is often antipathy between younger and older vagrants. There is also the question of whether the young would use the facilities.

Government committees are considering solutions. There is no doubt about the political, as well as social, urgency. The sight of young people sleeping rough is often blamed, rightly or wrongly, on a "Thatcherite society".

Leading article, page 13

Social Fund powers clarified

By Nicholas Wood, Political Correspondent

LEGAL changes aimed at reasserting ministerial control over the cost of emergency payments to the poor were announced by the Government yesterday.

The move came after a High Court ruling last month that ministers were exceeding their powers in official guidance to local Social Fund officers because it was too prescriptive and left insufficient scope for flexibility.

The Social Security Bill now before Parliament will be amended to clarify the powers of Mr Tony Newton, the Secretary of State for Social

Security, to exercise control over the £215 million fund.

Mr Nicholas Scott, the Minister of State for Social Security, was attacked by Labour for an "incompetent, cynical and dishonest" response to the court's judgment.

Mr Scott also announced that the amount allocated to the Social Fund would rise by £10 million to £215 million next month.

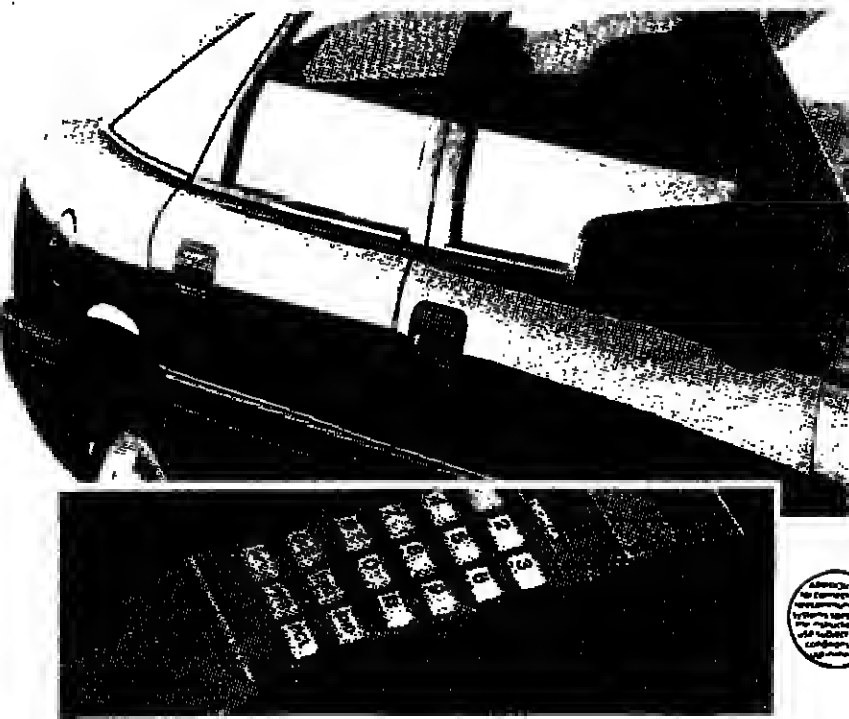
The fund, two-thirds of which is made available in loans, covers payments for items such as furniture and kitchen appliances for about 400,000 claimants.

Mr Scott said: "Although the court found that some of the guidance on budgets was too prescriptive, its judgement explicitly recognized that Parliament clearly intended that the Social Fund should be subject to strict monetary limits and that the Secretary of State needs to be able to give directions to achieve financial control."

As a result, he was introducing an amendment to make explicit the Secretary of State's controls on the extent and use of payments.

Parliament, page 7

Company car



Company car-phone



AUCTION THIS WEDNESDAY, 7.30 PM.

MASSIVE LIQUIDATION AUCTION

As result of recent U.S. Federal Bankruptcy Court Ruling Enforcing Closure of world famous prestige New York Fifth Avenue Department Store
FINEST, EXTREMELY VALUABLE, CONNOISSEUR SELECTION. HIGHEST RETAIL QUALITIES. AUTHENTIC HANDMADE
PERSIAN, ANATOLIAN, AFGHAN, CHINESE
and other exceptional, outstanding & decorative
ORIENTAL RUGS & RUNNERS
in all sizes including extra large, in Silk & Wool
Urgent attempt on behalf of creditors to clear vast retained warehouse stock contracted exclusively for world-renowned Oriental Rug Dept. of New York Store stopped in transit after Bankruptcy Court Ruling

IMMEDIATE SHORT NOTICE PUBLIC CLEARANCE AUCTION

WED., 28th MARCH, AT 7.30pm SHARP
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Detectives investigate charity's tele sales

By Mark Souster

HERTFORDSHIRE Fraud Squad is investigating a charity which uses telephone sales techniques to raise money for underprivileged children in the Third World.

The Children at Risk Fund has been receiving up to £1,000 a day, yet to date only £150 has been given to Oxfam and little if any has gone to other charities.

Accountants have also been called in to inspect the books of the charity—set up last July—after complaints by trustees, one of whom resigned last week. Only £800 has been received in unsolicited public donations.

While there is no evidence of criminal offences having been committed, concern has been expressed at the charity's tactics. Oxfam complained to the Charity Commission at the end of January about the use of its name during telephone canvassing.

Children at Risk, based at the Spirella Building, Bridge Road, Leitchworth, Hertfordshire, employs 40 staff, mainly women on a part-time basis. They are paid £4 an hour.

The charity raises money through emotive telephone sales. According to one source, employees are told they must sell at least £100 of advertising space per shift for a planned local business directory on the lines of the Thomson Local Directory. Sales staff use a prepared script when canvassing for advertisements.

"People are being deceived. They think 85 per cent of the cost of their advertisement is going to charity, and only 15 per cent is being used on administration. So far this has not been the case," the source said.

No directory has yet been produced, although one was promised within six months.

Oxfam said yesterday: "We are concerned about the operations and tactics of Children at Risk Fund and their use of Oxfam's good name."

Oxfam has asked the charity to stop using its name and for it to account for any funds received while Oxfam's name was being used.

It is believed that the Children at Risk Fund has raised more than £50,000 since its incorporation, the bulk since January when its telephone sales operation was stepped up. Mr Richard Hancock,

aged 44, of Lytton Avenue, Leitchworth, Hertfordshire, the chairman and a trustee of the charity said: "Most of the income has gone on salaries and telephone bills. We do intend bringing out a directory later this year."

It is understood that the charity's last quarterly telephone bill was about £20,000. Mr Hancock believed the police would exonerate the charity. "If they had found anything wrong they would have closed us on the spot."

References to Oxfam by sales staff had been a mistake and would not be repeated.

"We were sending money to Oxfam and expected to send more as a means of getting aid to Kampuchea," Mr Hancock said, adding that he had asked the Charity Commission to find another charity to whom Children at Risk could send its income.

"Eventually 85 per cent of our income will go to help water projects in Kampuchea. Every penny can be accounted for," he said.

The delay in producing a directory had been because Children at Risk wanted to ensure every business had an opportunity of advertising.

● The Charity Commission confirmed yesterday that it is to launch an inquiry into the collapse of War on Want, the Third World aid charity that is to be wound up.

War on Want has estimated debts of £2million, including a £780,000 overdraft secured on its south-east London headquarters, which are for sale.

War on Want needed the money to help to repay two consortiums of British and European charities £1.7 million after they decided to pull out of joint financial long-term aid projects in Ethiopia and separate their accounts. Part of the money also went on redundancy payments.

● Legislation to reform charity law and reduce the risk of fraud and maladministration in the £13 billion charitable sector is likely to be delayed for another year.

Senior Government officials said yesterday the parliamentary session beginning in November was already "choc-a-bloc" with planned Bills and that legislation on charities would probably have to wait until the session starting November 1991.

Gentle Rottweiler's lonely message for No 10



A LONE Rottweiler named Susie outside the gates of Downing Street yesterday after Mrs Yvonne Wilson (standing), her owner, and Mrs Allison Hodges, another owner, had handed in at No 10 a petition containing 300 signatures. It opposed the banning of Rottweilers or making their owners obtain special licences (Robin Young writes). Plans for up to 100 Rottweilers and their owners to march on Downing Street to present the petition were abandoned on Sunday because they could have coincided with an anti-apartheid demonstration. As it was, Susie, during her token appearance, didn't have a tooth or put a paw out of place.

Leading article, page 13

Linley sues for libel over 'lager lout' story

By Michael Horsnell

LORD LINLEY became the first member of the Royal Family to bring a libel action to court yesterday when he sued a newspaper for portraying him as "an upper-class lager lout".

According to a gossip column report in *Today*, the Queen's nephew had been banned from a London public house after throwing a pint of beer at a group of friends. But the report was a fabrication, a High Court jury was told.

Lord Linley, aged 28, said: "My first instinct was to be incredibly angry due to the fact that it was totally untrue. My second thought was that probably my family would read it and that it could have a damaging effect on them."

The son of Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon is seeking damages against the newspaper's publishers, News (UK) Ltd.

Mr Charles Gray, QC, his counsel, told Mr Justice Michael Davies that the article, headlined "Hooray Linley's local says ale and farewell" appeared in the Chris Hutch-

ins *Confidential* column on March 28 last year.

It alleged he was banned from the Ferret and Firkin at Chelsea Harbour after a "childish beer-throwing incident involving David and a group of his chums".

In fact, Lord Linley had visited the public house only once, two years earlier, and had never engaged in boisterous behaviour, Mr Gray said.

"This story portrayed Lord Linley as a 'Hooray Henry' and described him as having



Lord Linley: Concerned about effect on his family

behaved in the manner of an upper-class lager lout."

The next day, Lord Linley wrote to the newspaper seeking damages, an apology and a correction, but *Today* said it stood by its story.

In the article, Mrs Carolyn Peacock, the manageress of the public house, was alleged to have said: "Linley and about eight of his pals came in at lunchtime and ordered a round of beer. He amazed everyone when he picked up his pint and chucked it over the others."

The article went on: "Before things got completely out of hand, I went over and told him that we cater only for adults and that he'd better go to the kindergarten playground next door."

"At that point one of his pals said, 'Do you know who this man is, madam?' I told them it made no difference to me and they could go outside and quietly pour beer over each other's heads, but not to throw it around in here."

At the end of the article Mrs Peacock was reported as saying: "David Linley is quite a

regular here and he's nice when he's not being arrogant and throwing his money around like his beer. He often pops in but now we keep a close eye on him to make sure he doesn't get out of order."

Lord Linley noticed that the article was largely quoted attributed to Mrs Peacock, so he called to see her the next day. Mrs Peacock told him she had said nothing to any reporter about any such incident.

Mr Gray said it was right that someone in Lord Linley's position had to put up with the "persistent and sometimes rather unwelcome attentions of the press", but this time he felt the story was over the limit because it was fictitious.

The jury was asked to take into account the "high-handed way" in which *Today* dealt with the complaint, publishing an apology at the last minute six weeks ago.

Lord Linley said the Ferret and Firkin was not his "local" though he had once had a pleasant lunch there.

As chairman of David Linley Furniture, he feared the

article could have damaged his business reputation. "Say I was going to a meeting with the bank or a company about to place a large order. The minute they read that I was seen splashing beer they perhaps would not place their order."

He added: "I have a lot of press comments and so one does harden oneself to certain matters of inaccuracy, but this was completely untrue and I felt they had gone too far."

"I was extremely hurt that it was alleged I should do anything like that."

Mrs Peacock told the court she had never spoken to any journalist about any such beer-throwing incident.

The case continues today. ● The last time a member of the Royal Family appeared in court is believed to have been during the Great Baccarat scandal of 1890, when a slander action was brought by a card player accused of cheating. The then Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) gave evidence about the game, at which he was a

player. The case continues today.

Lawyers attack court work changes

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

PLANS by the Lord Chancellor's Department to allow court staff to take over a range of work from judges, including drawing up papers for "quickie" divorces, were criticized by the Law Society yesterday.

In its response to the department, the society said it would be "disastrous" to send more work down to officials at a time when staff in many courts cannot cope with the existing workload.

Nor, the society says, would it be appropriate for an administrative official to decide whether a divorce should be granted or not.

The Lord Chancellor's Department says the reforms are aimed at freeing registrars, one of the junior judicial tiers, so that they can cope with an expected rise in county court work. However, the

Law Society says courts are already struggling with high staff turnover and problems in recruiting and retaining people of the right calibre.

The Lord Chancellor's Department issued a consultation paper in January proposing that a range of work be devolved to court officials.

The society is concerned that some of the functions chosen for devolution, such as consent orders and special procedure certificates, are too "judicial" in nature to be done by administrative staff. It says there should be judicial scrutiny of the documents.

However, it backs plans to empower administrators to rule on so-called attachment of earnings orders, and other proposals, including granting administrators authority in cases involving

debt collection, were acceptable subject to strict guidelines.

● The Home Office and the Lord Chancellor's Department are expected to drop plans to replace committal proceedings with an administrative paper procedure for sending cases direct to the crown court without a hearing.

It is now believed that officials will move towards a reform of the committal system only if both prosecution and defence agree, while preserving the defendant's right to insist on, and attend, a formal committal hearing.

The defence would have the right to a formal committal and both prosecution and defence would retain the right to a full "old-style" committal, with statements read or evidence called.

BBC apologizes to petrol industry over report errors

By Richard Evans, Media Editor

THE BBC apologized "unreservedly" to Shell UK and other leading oil companies yesterday for errors and misstatements in a *Watchdog* programme on petrol pricing.

The extent of the mistakes made by *Watchdog* in its consumer report broadcast on October 9 is reflected in the 480-word correction and apology the BBC has agreed to print in the forthcoming edition of *Radio Times*. A slightly shorter version will be screened at peak viewing times tonight on BBC 1 and tomorrow on BBC 2.

The BBC, which is proud of its impartial and accurate reporting, has been fired to make the embarrassing climb-down because of numerous inaccuracies and misleading statements in the item about the petrol industry and the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC) investigation into it.

The *Watchdog* presenter made accusations of profiteering and collusion by the petrol retailing industry and claimed to have an unpublished interim report from the commission to support the allegations. No such document existed.

An unnamed journalist who helped to make the programme has been reprimanded but will remain in the BBC's topical features section, the corporation said yesterday.

Hopefully we are big enough to accept that and apologize."

● The director-general and chairman of the BBC are not joining the corporation's top executives in a move to a new headquarters aimed at saving money and improving efficiency.

Mr Michael Checkland, the director-general, has decided that he will stay at Broadcasting House with Mr Marmaduke Hussey, the chairman, and a few aides while remaining senior corporate managers move to the £59 million development at White City, west London.

Many staff are reluctant to make the switch because of the shortage of facilities, including shops, and poor transport compared to central London.

One of the main reasons for moving corporate staff, now in Broadcasting House and a variety of rented offices, was to enable them to work together. Mr Checkland's decision has infuriated some colleagues.

The official reason for his decision flows from the abandonment of the third phase of the White City development, due to be completed in the late 1990s. Radio will now remain at Broadcasting House. A spokesman said that it was felt that a small number of headquarters staff would also be better situated in central London.

TV pirates aid actors' charity

By Simon Tait

EUROPEAN cable television "pirates" have unwittingly provided £4.5 million for the welfare of British theatre performers and their industry.

A charity, the Equity Trust Fund, was set up yesterday by Equity, the actors' union, with the money contributed by cable companies in Belgium, The Netherlands and Denmark over the last six years.

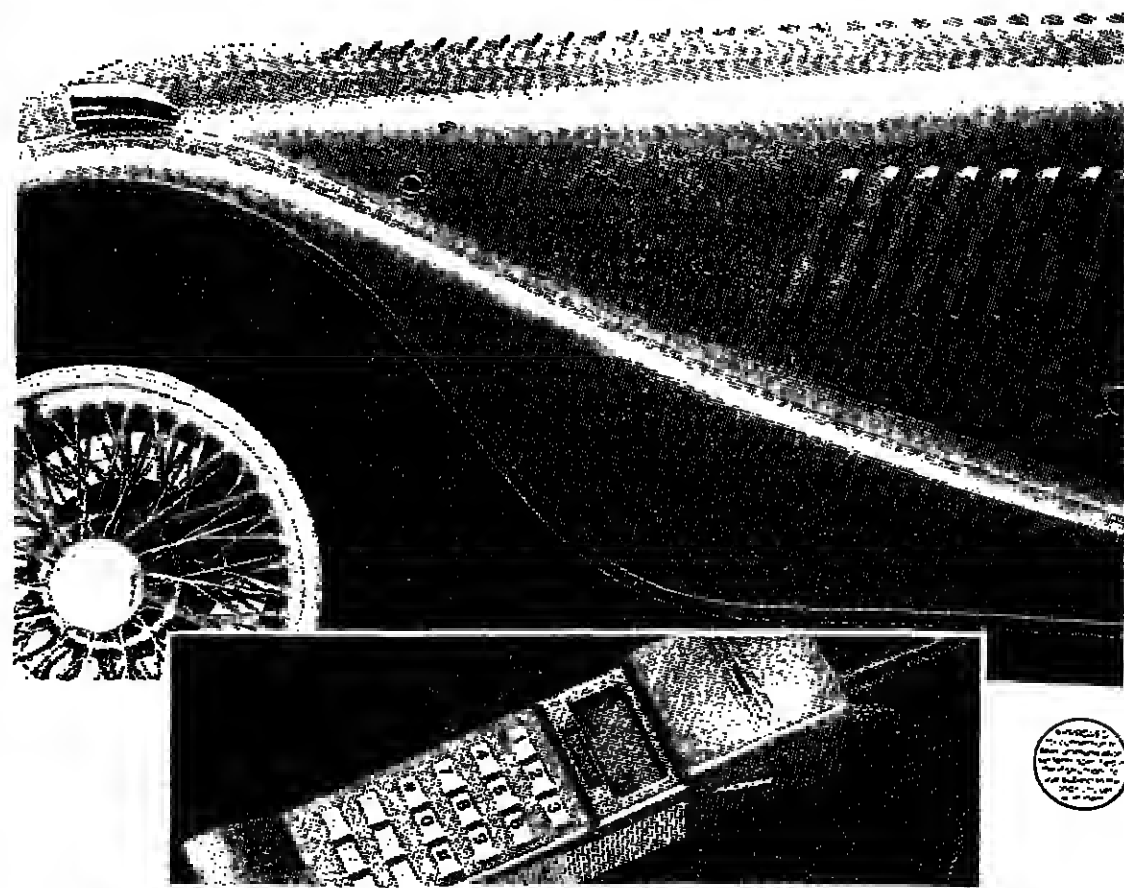
The money had been paid by the companies for use of pirated programmes taken directly off transmission, and paid in lieu of "moral" copyright after negotiations by the BBC and the ITV companies.

Mr Peter Flouvier, Equity general secretary, said a third of the money paid in the television companies had gone to three bodies representing performers: Equity, the Musicians' Union and the Incorporated Society of Musicians. The sums invested annually by Equity had accumulated to £4.5 million.

The money would help a profession whose members, apart from a small minority of stars, were among the lowest paid workers in Britain, he said.

The trust fund would be concerned with performers' welfare, maintenance of the arts, particularly in the theatre, and for education and training.

Classic car



Classic car-phone

Contender in Runcie succession takes the Church to court

By Clifford Longley, Religious Affairs Editor

ONE OF the leading contenders for the succession to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Right Rev Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford, became embroiled yesterday in a legal action against the Church of England's paymasters, the Church Commissioners.

Sir Douglas Lovelock, First Church Estates Commissioner, dismissed Bishop Harries' claim that his intentions were friendly, adding: "It will be seen as one part of the Church taking another to court and I cannot persuade myself that that's a very good idea."

While Bishop Harries was insisting that he did not want to be Archbishop of Canterbury — and rather acting that way — another of the contenders, the Right Rev William Westwood, Bishop of Peterborough, set out a bold manifesto in yesterday's *Daily Mail*. "Whoever it is, I would offer him one biblical message," he wrote. "Be strong and of good courage."

The Church of England had become too concerned with minority interests, which left it with no message "for ordinary people who are making something of their lives," Bishop Westwood added.

The next archbishop should spend less time overseas. He should "give a positive expression of Christian faith". There was a massive spiritual vacuum in the nation "and the task of any Archbishop of Canterbury at the end of this century will be to lead the church to fill this vacuum".

Bishop Harries' law suit against the Church Commissioners, of which he is one himself, concerns the extent to

which the commissioners may take ethical considerations into account in their investment policy.

Asked at a press conference about his interest in succeeding Dr Runcie, he replied: "Of course I will be joining with all other Christians sincerely praying that a right decision is made on this matter."

"I don't want the job, and I don't think it's appropriate for me or any other bishop to speculate on it."

He said the legal case was meant to be "a friendly rather than a hostile action". He had counsel's opinion to support his view that the Commissioners had a duty to follow a policy in which Christian values, rather than financial gains, were the overriding priority; and he was seeking a High Court ruling to that effect.

"We are seeking to co-operate with the Church Commissioners as much as possible. There is a genuine dilemma here and it's in the interests of the Church Commissioners that this be resolved." The bishop launched an appeal for pledges totalling £25,000 to cover the costs of the case.

The bishop denied the argument was only about the rights and wrongs of investing in South Africa. "Although that was the spark which forced a review of the whole investment issue, it goes far wider than that," he said. The Church of England was open to criticism for its policies regarding industry and commerce and it needed to have "a more positive attitude".

Sir Douglas, who is an *ex officio* senior member of the

General Synod, said later that the commissioners would contest the case.

"Our job is to protect and defend the parochial clergy. It is said that we have to use the money which should be going to them to do so. But we cannot allow their interests to go by default," he said.

"I am sure Dr Harries has the most friendly of motives. I wouldn't deny that. But I don't think you can have a friendly court action. I think it's a contradiction in terms."

Another strong candidate for Canterbury, Dr Robert Eames, the Archbishop of Armagh, refused to give any press interviews yesterday, although as recently as last week he discussed his prospects on a local radio programme in Northern Ireland.

"It is not for anyone to say they would welcome or not welcome any challenge," he had said.

The Prime Minister had shown "at times, I think, a willingness to listen to anything that I have had to say" and to "acknowledge" it.

Dr Runcie announced on Sunday that he had submitted his resignation to the Queen, and he will retire at the end of next January, eight months before his 70th birthday.

Mr Tony Benn, the Labour MP, yesterday challenged the Church of England to put forward only one name for Dr Runcie's successor to Mrs Thatcher for approval — and said she should endorse it without question. In a Commons motion he states that "the control of the Church of England by the state is a dangerous anachronism" that ought to end.

MR GARY BEVANS, a signwriter with no formal artistic training, with reproductions of Michelangelo's paintings in the Sistine Chapel which he has painted in the Holy Martyrs Catholic church in Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex. The church is an otherwise undistinguished prefabricated building which happens to be the same width as the original in Rome.

While the Sistine Chapel has just reopened after restoration, Mr Bevans still has many months' work ahead of him completing the only copy outside Rome (Robin Young writes).

He has worked 50 hours a week for two years on the

ceiling, sometimes until two am. Michelangelo took four years to paint the original, but he did not have to earn a living by day painting pub signs and doing lettering on vans.

The inspiration for Mr Bevans' labour of love came from a parishioner's trip to Rome. The signwriter has been named Man of the Year by Worthing Council and his work has already attracted 5,000 visitors.

There has been some success in raising money for the project by asking £50 for the right to dedicate each of the plywood panels on which Mr Bevans makes his paintings, but he says he would be glad of more sponsorship.

A little bit of Rome comes to Goring-by-Sea



Hard fight as Karpov wins place in finals

By Raymond Keene Chess Correspondent

ANATOLY Karpov, the Soviet former world chess champion, has emerged victorious with consummate ease in his world title qualifying match in Kuala Lumpur against Jan Timman, the Dutch grandmaster. He dominated the match from the start and yesterday clinched victory in a hard-fought ninth game.

This win with the black pieces gave Karpov the 6½ points needed to win the best-of-12 match and ensure a renewed challenge against his arch-rival, Gary Kasparov, the world champion.

The necessity of a win made Timman take too many risks, and the game boiled down to a race of pawns on opposite wings of the board. Karpov's proved the more effective in the struggle to become queen.

Experts thought that Timman's 39th move cost him the win to which capturing a black pawn instead might have led.

The final will start in New York on October 7 and transfer to Lyons. It is likely to last two months. A prize of \$3 million (£1.8 million) is on offer. For the first time since 1948, the championship will be run not by Fide, the world chess federation, but by a neutral committee of representatives of Fide and of the Association of Grandmasters, of which Kasparov is president and which was set up in 1986.

White	Black	White	Black
1 a4	e5	28 Rg2	Kf7
2 Nf3	Nc6	29 Rf1	Bd4
3 Bb5	a6	30 Rf1	Bd3
4 Bx4	Nf6	31 Nc3	c4
5 B-0	Bc7	32 Rf1	c4
6 Rf1	b5	33 a5	chd5
7 Nc3	c6	34 Bg5	Nf6
8 c3	0-0	35 Ng4	Nd5
9 h3	Bd7	36 Nf4	gxd6
10 Bg5	Nd7	37 Bxh3	Nf6
11 Nf4	Bf6	38 Bf1	Bd4
12 a4	b6	39 Bc2	Bd4
13 Bc2	exd4	40 Bc3	Bxd3
14 cxd4	Nb4	41 Bxd3	a3
15 Bb1	c5	42 Bx5	Bx5
16 c5	Nd7	43 e5	Rd1
17 R3	c5	44 Rd1	Bxd1
18 Bxd3	a4	45 d7	Bd1
19 Rxd3	Nd5	46 Bf7	Rd8
20 Nf1	Rxd3	47 Rb2	Rb1+
21 Bg3	Rxd3	48 Kf2	Rd2
22 Bf2	Rd3	49 Bxh3	Rd7
23 Qd2	Qxd3	50 Kf1	Rxd2+
24 Qd4	Qxd4	51 Kxd2	b6
25 Qxd4	Qxd4	52 Bx4	Bd7
26 Nxd4	Qxd4	53 Kd3	Nd5
27 K4	a5	54 Kd4	Bd5
28 K3	Bd6	55 c4	Kxd7
		56 c5	Bd7

White resigns

Privatized sector shines in list of top companies

By David Young

SOME companies once seen as ugly ducklings or even as lame ducks have emerged as highly profitable swans under the Government's privatization programme.

The policy of removing state shackles and launching companies into the private sector, often with their customers as shareholders, has created four of the country's 20 most profitable companies per employee, with one of them emerging as the most profitable company in Britain and the highest wages payer.

Enterprise Oil, created from the former oil exploration assets held by British Gas, last year made profits of £288,500 per employee and paid its 234 staff an average of £32,100 and its directors an average of £77,857. In addition, British Telecom, another former state-owned company, has emerged overall as the most profitable company in Britain, with pre-tax profits last year of £2.4 billion.

The performance of former state-owned companies will be welcomed by the Government in the week that it takes the electricity industry into the private sector with the creation of 16 new companies that will be privatized this autumn and early next year.

Many of the figures used by the magazine *Management Today* for its league table, published today, have been gleaned from company reports for the previous financial year and higher profits are expected from British Steel, British Airways and British Telecom.

Enterprise Oil, recently the subject of takeover speculation in the City, has built on the inheritance it received from the Government in the shape of substantial oil discoveries earlier made by British Gas. It has also, however, been aggressive in the world oil exploration market.

However the figures also show that some of the best known business names and recent stock market favourites such as Lloyds, Asda, Whitbread, Tesco, Sainsbury and Marks & Spencer are among

the lower payers in the top 100 companies, although in most cases the earnings figures are affected by the large number of part-time staff they employ.

Lloyds, whose figures are affected by its large number of employees in low-pay countries, is 96th in terms of employee profitability and bottom of the list in terms of pay. It made £2,500 per employee and paid them an average of £3,800, while its directors averaged £291,666 a year, a figure only outstripped by the directors of Hanson Trust (£666,666 a year), Ultramar Oil (£469,230), ICI (£456,250) and BOC (£345,454).

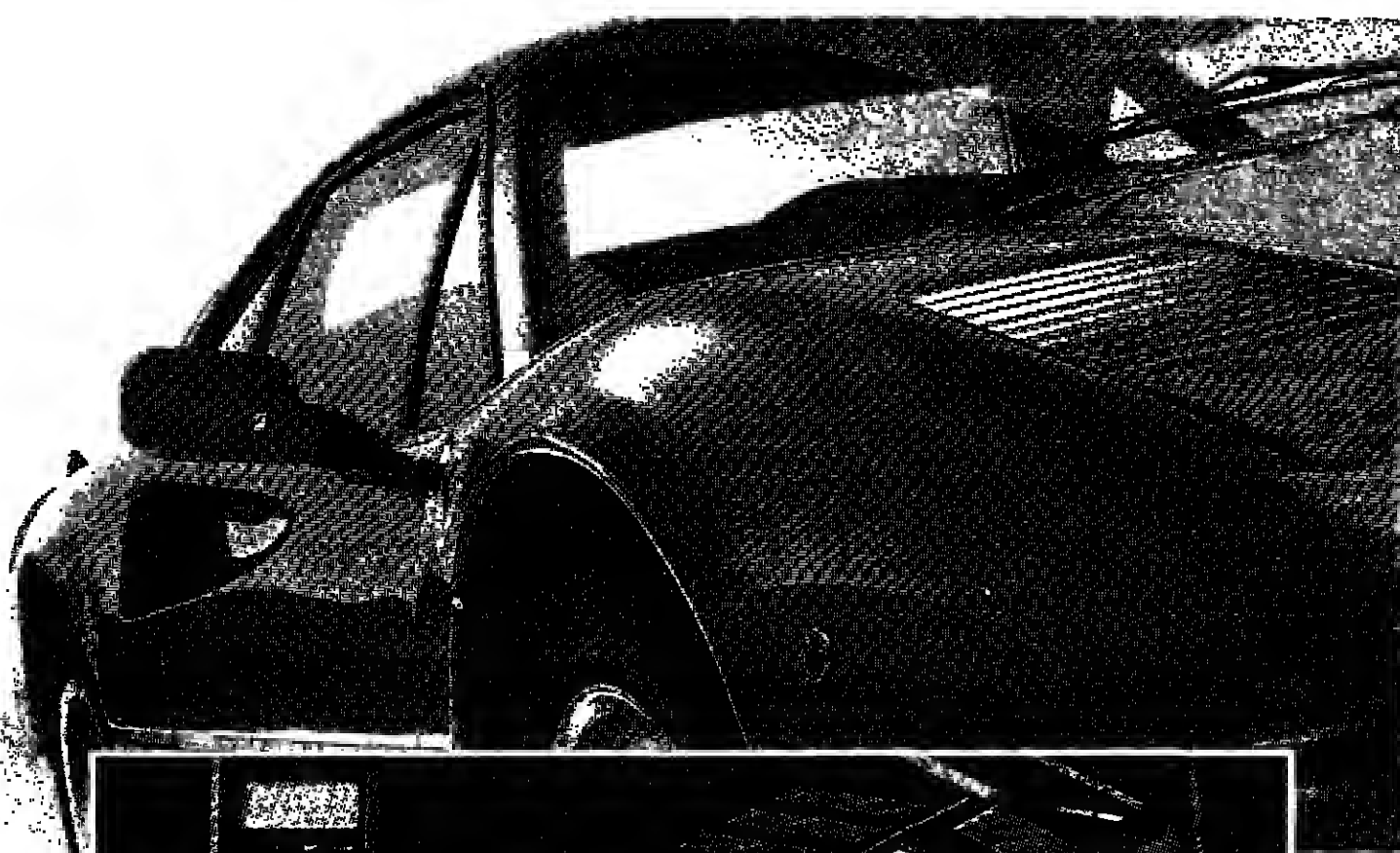
Asda pay averaged £5,300, while its directors earned an average of £185,714. Whitbread paid its staff an average of £5,900, while its directors earned an average of £140,000. Tesco paid its staff an average of £6,200, while its directors averaged £130,769. Sainsbury paid its staff an average of £6,900, while its directors on average earned £123,529, and Marks & Spencer staff earned an average of £8,100, and its directors averaged £175,000.

Among the former state-owned companies, BAA, the former British Airways Authority has emerged in tenth place in the table, with profits per employee of £22,900 and an average wage for its 8,645 employees of £17,100. Its directors received an average of £116,666 in pay last year.

British Gas is in 14th place, with profits per employee of £16,300 and paying its 81,832 staff an average of £14,400 and its directors an average of £66,666. Cable and Wireless, one of the first privatized companies, comes next with profits per employee of £14,300. Its 29,320 employees were paid an average of £10,200, although its directors were paid an average of £130,000. BP, formerly substantially Government-owned, although always a private sector company, is in 13th place, with profits per employee of £16,500.

Payers' table, page 28

Performance car



Performance car-phones

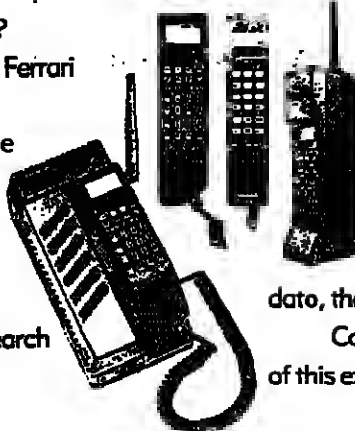
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One-day teachers' strike called after 36% back protest

By Douglas Broom, Education Reporter

ALMOST a quarter of state school teachers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are to stage a one-day strike on Wednesday, April 4 to protest at the Government's decision to impose an 8.3 per cent pay deal.

The National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers issued the strike call yesterday in spite of securing the support of only just over one in three of its 98,000 state school members for industrial action.

In a ballot, 35,450 (61.8 per cent of those voting) were in favour of striking and 21,949 (38.2 per cent) against. The turnout was 57,399, just over half of the union's members and an eighth of the teaching force.

The result came after intense lobbying characterised by last-minute staffroom pleas by branch officials for support for the strike. The larger National Union of Teachers has refused to join in the action.

The strike call was condemned by Mr John MacGregor, Secretary of State for Education and Science,

who described it as "completely unjustified".

"I am deeply disappointed that the NAS/UWT has elected to deprive children of a day of education at what, for many, is a crucial time of the year and to do so on the positive support of only one-third of their members," he said.

"It will simply distract attention from the hard work and professional commitment which the great majority of teachers are showing and for which they deserve public recognition."

Mr Fred Smithies, the union's general secretary, said that he was confident his members would support what he termed "the minimum possible tangible protest action available to teachers".

He rejected any suggestion that the strike would antagonise parents and said: "Only those parents who wish to take a doctrinaire political view will feel aggrieved."

Teachers had to show the Government that they had "the will to resist yet another pay cut imposed on them by the Government". Dismissing

questions about the size of the vote in favour of action, Mr Smithies said: "The Prime Minister has never enjoyed more than the support of 33 per cent of the electorate and we have 36 per cent for our strike."

Two years ago the NAS/UWT had to abandon a similar attempt to get teachers to strike over pay after only just over a third of its state school members turned out to vote.

In the past the union has ensured maximum support for its industrial action by making clear that it would not hesitate to discipline members who refused to strike.

However, since the last round of teachers' strikes ended in 1987 legislation has deprived unions of the power to punish members who ignore strike calls.

Union leaders conceded yesterday that even if they managed to persuade a majority of their members to strike it was highly unlikely that any schools would be closed although several thousand children were likely to be sent home.

Welsh craftsmanship comes out on top

NICK GOLDFINGER

By Ruth Gledhill



Mr Richardson (left) and Mr Pendleton at work on the roof, whose owner could not find Americans to match their skills

THE devastation caused by Hurricane Hugo has opened up an unexpected source of revenue for Mr Alfred Richardson, a retired Welsh slater, and Mr Bill Pendleton, his colleague.

Mr Richardson, aged 65, from Prestatyn, Clwyd, was flown to Charleston, South Carolina with Mr Pendleton, aged 43, to repair a 300-year-old roof ripped apart by the hurricane on a six-bedroom house.

Mr Philip Middleton, its owner, hired the Welshmen because they possessed technical skills local labour could not match.

Their work was admired by the Prince of Wales when he saw the house on a visit to the town last month.

Mr Middleton, a lawyer, said: "I talked to any number of Americans about their capacity to slate a roof. They all told me they were experts. But I had been briefed on a couple of key questions to ask them and no American could answer those."

Mr Richardson, from Prestatyn, Clwyd, is using slates from a Welsh quarry matched to samples of the original slate. He said he had been inundated with offers of work in the historic town but his visa restricts him to working for one man.

He added: "We have had bad weather in Wales but I have never seen anything as bad as this place."

Met chief foresees women in senior posts

By Stewart Tendler
Crime Correspondent

BRITAIN could have its first woman chief constable within ten years, Sir Peter Imbert, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, said yesterday. Speaking at the unveiling of a report outlining a five-year programme to provide equal opportunities within his own force, Sir Peter said: "We have some very bright and good lady officers rising through the ranks. I think we will probably see a female chief constable within the next ten years."

Mr David Waddington, Home Secretary, added that women officers had reached senior levels in two forces. One is an assistant chief constable in Merseyside and the other an acting deputy assistant commissioner at Scotland Yard.

Last year, a Home Office circular was sent to all chief constables giving guidance on equal opportunities. Mr Waddington said.

The Home Office was looking into the feasibility of part-time work, and Scotland Yard had asked it for advice on the introduction of job sharing.

The police were having difficulty attracting recruits because of the declining number of school leavers, and the service had to recruit more women, especially from the ethnic minorities.

The report on the London programme, carried out with the help of the Equal Opportunities Commission, shows that the number of women police officers in the force rose from 6.7 per cent in 1978 to over 12 per cent in 1989, at a time when the force strength in the same period had risen from 22,197 to 28,267.

A quarter of all applicants for police jobs are now women, and they make up 24 per cent of all successful recruits. The force has nine female officers in its superintendent ranks and 38 among the inspectors' ranks.

Reform of prisoner complaint rules likely

By Quentin Cowdry
Home Affairs Correspondent

THE appointment of an ombudsman to investigate prisoners' complaints, an idea advocated by penal reformers for 20 years, has moved a step closer after a Prison Department decision to accept the proposal in principle.

Such a move would restore confidence in inmate grievance procedures, reduce the vulnerability of staff to unfounded allegations and generally lessen tensions in jails, the department has said. The final decision lies with Mr David Waddington, the Home Secretary.

The recommendation, agreed at the last meeting of the department's board, means that it is now almost inevitable that a "prisons ombudsman" will be created.

Any appointment, however, might be delayed for up to 18 months because officials think it is important that revised complaint rules, to be introduced in September, should have time to settle down.

The change would also require legislation and substantial Treasury support. The cost of independently investigating 1,000 complaints a year is estimated at £3.4 million.

From September the present system whereby inmates can either petition their governor, the local board of visitors or the Home Secretary will be replaced by a "hierarchical" structure.

Under this, all complaints will be heard initially by the governor, with more difficult disputes being handled by regional or headquarters staff. If an ombudsman were to be appointed, complaints which failed to be solved at the second tier could be referred to independent arbitration. The ombudsman's findings would be technically non-binding but, in practice, would be accepted in most cases.

Bomb hoaxer jailed

A MAN was jailed for nine months yesterday after admitting sending a hoax bomb to the Queen while she and other members of the Royal family were at Sandringham, Norfolk. At King's Lynn Crown Court, Mr Charles Kellett, prosecuting, said John Pryse-Jones, aged 58, of Rhianva Court, Hunstanton, Norfolk, had a previous conviction for sending a hoax bomb to Mr Henry Bellingham, MP for Norfolk North West.

£80,000 award

VISCOUNT Raynham won £80,000 agreed damages at the High Court yesterday over the death of his wife in a crash at East Rudham, near King's Lynn, Norfolk, in December 1985. The award was against the estate of the other driver who was also killed.

Tolstoy delay

THE COURT of Appeal yesterday reserved its decision on whether to order Count Nikolai Tolstoy to put up £188,000 security for costs before being allowed to pursue his appeal against the libel verdict and £1.5 million damages won by Lord Aldington last November.

Safety failing

TRANSMANCHE Link, the consortium building the Channel tunnel, was fined £50,000 yesterday at Maidstone Crown Court, Kent, when it admitted failing to take precautions to ensure its employees' safety.

Inquest opens

AN INQUEST into the death of Farzad Bazoft, the Observer newspaper correspondent executed in Iraq as an alleged spy, was opened and adjourned at St Pancras Coroner's Court, London, yesterday.



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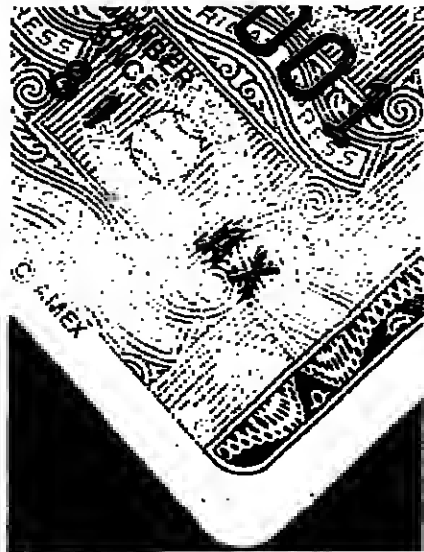
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PARLIAMENT

Peers protest at move on under-18 loans

GOVERNMENT and Opposition peers protested at a late attempt to amend the Education (Student Loans) Bill to correct an oversight by civil servants over repayment by students under the age of 18.

The amendment, tabled by the Government last Thursday, would exempt students under the age of 18 from paying interest on the loans and give the Government immunity under the Consumer Credit Act to send loan literature to minors.

As the report stage of the Bill started, Lord Belstead, Leader of the House, refused to withdraw the amendment, but promised peers that the Government would not seek to bulldoze it through.

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos, Leader of the Opposition, said that the amendment had been introduced to correct a defect in the Bill because it was found to be incompatible with the Consumer Credit Act, 1974.

"The introduction of minors into

the Bill is a complex and new dimension to the whole Bill. The fact that it is unlawful to charge interest to minors was in fact overlooked when the Bill was first drafted."

The amendment was likely to affect some 100,000 students, mostly in Scotland where more students entered college at 17, and there was also some doubt about the accuracy of the Government's proposed amendment. "The Opposition is asking for more time to consider all the implications of the new amendment which are very considerable, the legal implications and the administrative implications."

"I hope that the Leader of the House will now defer the amendment to enable those who are interested in this Bill to have more time. I think it is important that the House on report should be given an opportunity to consider this new development."

Lord Belstead said that the Gov-

HOUSE OF LORDS

ernment amendment had been tabled on Thursday and the Labour and Liberal Democrat whips had been informed later that day because issues were involved which had not been debated before.

Lord Pannett, chief Opposition spokesman on education, said that the way the amendment had been introduced was very unsatisfactory. "The Government should not proceed at a pace which did not allow detailed consideration."

He had been told by an expert that the Consumer Credit Act was very complicated and it would be "fantasy beyond belief" to get involved without full advice and briefing.

"This is an extremely serious matter and I am not in a position to debate this amendment today."

Lord Belstead said that it was

precisely because the amendment concerned an untried piece of legislation that the Opposition had been informed.

Lord Belstead (C) said that he had no view on the amendment which he had only just seen.

"I would like to point out that a Bill of this kind is not simply a matter for the two main Opposition parties. Most of us left the House late on Thursday afternoon or early in the evening not having had an opportunity of seeing this amendment."

"I first heard about this problem when I read the report in *The Times*. I think the whole House is entitled to be informed about the Government's amendment in time at least to have a weekend to consider it and not for it to be tabled in a way which really made the position of members and of the Opposition front bench, almost untenable."

Lord Belstead said that the House

had had a weekend to consider the amendment. The Government had acted in an open and honourable way. It was right that the amendment should be considered on report.

Lord Cledwyn of Penrhos said that the Leader of the House was being uncharacteristically unfair. The amendment changed the Bill in a fundamental way and few had been in the House, including government peers, when it had been tabled and the whips informed.

Lord Nugent of Guildford (C) said that the amendment stretched the terms of the Consumer Credit Act in order to make an exception. That might be valid, but it would not be possible to take the Bill on its merits without considering that very complicated Act.

Lord Belstead said that he could not accept that the Government had acted in an unreasonable way and, for that reason, he would not

withdraw the amendment. "What we ought to do is for the amendment to be moved and to be debated and if Lords then think having listened to the debate, that it is wholly unreasonable that it should go on the statute book, we must listen to the majority voice of the House. The Government will not seek to bulldoze it through."

© In a Commons written reply, Mr John MacGregor, Secretary of State for Education and Science, said: "I am now able to announce that, after parliamentary discussion during the various stages of the Education (Student Loans) Bill in both Houses, the Government has decided to increase to £20 million the Access Funds available for higher education."

This will give the higher education institutions greater scope for extending discretionary assistance on a flexible basis to their students. The move would have an effect, most

notably, on those students who were facing relatively high costs for their accommodation.

The necessary supplementary estimates approval for the additional expenditure of £10 million in 1990-91 will be sought in due course.

© In a further written answer, Mr MacGregor said: "I am now able to announce that the Government intends that the repayment period for students on courses that are longer than four years should be initially seven years. The standard repayment period for other students will be initially five years."

This will ensure that repayments are manageable for students on courses longer than four years. It will build up larger liabilities during their courses. As the scheme develops and loans increase in real terms, the standard repayment period will be extended. The repayment period for those on longer courses will be similarly extended.

Ministers act on social fund after court ruling

MINISTERS have acted to put beyond doubt that the Secretary of State for Social Security can specify who is eligible for payments from the social fund.

The move comes after a ruling in the High Court last month.

Mr Nicholas Scott, Minister for Social Security, said in a statement that he is to introduce an amendment to the Social Security Bill at present before Parliament to make explicit the power of the Secretary of State to give directions on the control of the social fund, from which grants and loans are made for specific purposes to people receiving income support.

He also announced a £10 million increase in the gross allocation to the fund, to £215 million for 1990-91.

Mr Michael Meacher, chief Opposition spokesman on social security, said that the statement was an incompetent, cynical and dishonest response to the judgement.

Mr Scott said that the statement arose from a High Court judgement on applications for judicial review in three cases concerning the social fund. That had confirmed the power to give directions for control and management of the fund, and confirmed the directions on how social fund officers should review decisions, but found that some aspects of the guidance on budgets was too prescriptive, and therefore not valid as guidance.

The Department of Social Security was today issuing new guidance to all social fund officers to take account of the court's decision that some of the guidance on the budget in the social fund manual had been couched in language that was too prescriptive for guidance.

There would also be guidance today about applications for review from people who might have had applications to the fund rejected on grounds of insufficient priority because of budgetary constraints. A leaflet for the public, providing information on the matter, was being distributed to DSS local offices.

From the date of the judgement cases should not have been refused on the basis of defective guidance, but if any applicants were dissatisfied with the social fund officer's decision in their case, they had the right to request a review.

In the light of the judgement, but was intended to be a reference to the Social Security Bill.

Changes to the social fund scheme to be made from April 9 would mean that people over 60 might qualify for help while retaining up to £1,000 in savings, rather than £500. The amount of maternity expenses payable would increase from £85 to £100.

He had announced last year that the gross allocation for discretionary payments in 1990-91 would be £205 million, but experience of opening the loan element of the fund had clearly shown that it would be possible to use the available resources even more flexibly next year through recalculation of repayments returning to the fund.

"I am now able to increase the gross allocation by a further £10 million for 1990-91 to £215 million. This means that the gross budget for 1990-91 will be £12 million higher than the

SOCIAL SECURITY

allocation made in April 1989.

"The £215 million will be divided to provide £152 million for loans and £63 million for grants. As in previous years, I shall be holding back £2 million as a contingency reserve."

In allocating budgets to local offices, the DSS had included the value of the additional allocations amounting to £3 million made in December and January to 106 offices facing particular pressure.

All the department's 448 local offices would have a higher allocation next year and 15 per cent of the offices would have increases of 10 per cent or more on April 1989 allocations. Nearly three-quarters of them would get increases of 5 per cent or more.

The measures would ensure that the fund continued to be a fair and flexible scheme for those most in need (Labour laughter).

Mr Meacher said that the real meaning of this disingenuous statement was that the Government intended to ignore the decision and to give a nod and a wink to social fund officers to muddle through as best they could for the next month or two and, when the Bill came in, to make a directive that the cash-limited budget must, in all cases, be the overriding consideration so that any pretence of flexibility or discretion was removed.

The response was a contempt because it left the local office in a state of limbo, cynical because it effectively put the High Court decision on ice, and dishonest because it sidestepped any review of past claimants on the basis of the court ruling.

The statement dodged the central issue of the cash-limited budget which was being raised by less than the rate of inflation.

Sir George Young (Ealing, Acton, C) said that the judgement had made clear that the fund was meant to be subject to cash limits and that the Secretary of State had to have power to issue regulations. With the extra help announced, it was an effective instrument of social policy.

Mr Scott agreed and said that the predecessor schemes, for single payments and the like, were totally out of control.

Sir David Price (Eastleigh, C) sought an assurance that the social services office would refuse a legitimate claim on the ground that it had exceeded its budget.

Mr Scott said that between now and the time that the Social Security Bill was enacted social fund officers would work in accordance with the guidelines issued today. Offices would have to take account of the budget and priorities, but that would not be the overriding factor.

Mr Robert McCrindle (Brentwood and Ongar, C) wondered if the 70 per cent of the increase for loans and only 30 per cent for grants was the correct ratio, bearing in mind the acute difficulty which some recipients had repaying loans.

Would the minister confirm that if someone on a repayment of a loan in one year, that would not militate against him or her being offered a grant in succeeding years?

Mr Scott said that that would be a matter for individual

judgement by social fund officers in the circumstances of the case.

The proportion of grants and loans was broadly the same as that for last year.

Mr Charles Kennedy, Liberal Democrat spokesman on health, said that only one in ten of offices would have increases in their budgets to keep pace with inflation and these figures were distorted because many people had not bothered to claim in the first place. They knew that any help would be in the form of a loan which would come off their benefits.

Mr Scott said it was not inflation which had to be borne in mind. It was the level of need and the flexibility with which the department was able to react.

The income support case load has gone down. It would be possible to make out a case for reducing the budget. In fact, the Government had increased it.

Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman (Lancaster, C) asked what ministers would do if an office ran out of money.

Mr Scott said that no office had run out of money or was in danger of doing so.

Mr Ted Rowlands (Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney, Lab) asked whether the new guidance being issued would allow payments for housing repairs.

Mr Scott said that, apart from the Social Fund, income support could provide help with housing repairs and the Department of the Environment also had schemes.

Mrs Audrey Wise (Preston, Lab) said the minister could not know if payments were equitable if it was not known the priority given, for example, to paying for a pair of shoes.

Mr Scott said York University was carrying out a monitoring of the effect of the social fund. The report would be made next year.

Mr Patrick Thompson (North, C) welcomed the extra money, but asked how constituents who had previously been refused claims could re-apply.

Mr Scott said an applicant had only to go along and ask for their case to be reviewed by the local office and that would be done in the light of the new guidance.

Mr Dafydd Wigley (Caernarfon, Pl C) called for an assurance that no top priority cases would be refused help because of lack of money.

Mr Scott replied that he could see no reason why the needs of those with the highest priority should not be able to be met.

Mr Anthony Beaumont-Dark (Birmingham, Selly Oak, C) said that a problem arose if more people were in need than there was cash available.

Mr Dennis Skinner (Bolsover, Lab) said Mr Scott had admitted that the amount was going to be less next year, taking inflation into account.

Instead of running to the television to twist words and give people the idea that this was a real advance, he should go to "cardboard city" and address people there who had finished up in a heap because they had been unable to get the proper grants which used to be available.

Mr Scott said that, in practice, the allocation for the coming year, compared with the allocation last year, would be broadly in line with the index-



Mr David Hunt (left), who is due soon to take up the office of Secretary of State for Wales from Mr Peter Walker (right), outside the Welsh Office in Whitehall yesterday with Herr Lothar Späth, Prime Minister of Baden-Württemberg. Herr Späth will be visiting Wales next week with a team of businessmen.

Timetable for joining ERM too leisurely, says Lawson

THE TIMETABLE envisaged by the Government for joining the exchange-rate mechanism of the European Monetary System might be somewhat too leisurely for the circumstances in which the country found itself, Mr Nigel Lawson, former Chancellor of the Exchequer, said during the resumed debate on the Budget.

"In my judgement, it is a pity we did not join some time ago, but we did not. We cannot afford to take the risks involved in a leisurely timetable."

He described non-membership of the mechanism as an exposed flank, and suggested that Britain should join the mechanism, if necessary within the wider bands of adjustment available, rather than the narrower ones.

He said that Mr Major, the Chancellor, had said that he favoured a strong exchange rate. But it might be that words alone would not be enough.

Mr Michael Howard, Secretary of State for Employment, opening the fourth and final day's debate on the Budget, said that the past seven years had seen unprecedented growth in employment.

The country had experienced the longest period of sustained unemployment since the war. It was a record the Budget was designed to sustain and reinforce.

There were now 27 million jobs in the United Kingdom, 4 million more than in 1983. The number had grown three times more quickly than the European average.

"We have seen unemployment falling steadily for 43 months running. At 1.6 million over the last half year, it was in 1986. Our unemployment rate of 5.6 per cent is a full three percentage points below the EC average."

Long-term unemployment was falling even more quickly, with the number down 780,000 since 1986. At the last election Labour promised a reduction of one million in two years; the Conservatives had done it in less than two.

The Budget gave priority to the control of inflation. It would

be fatal to relax the tight monetary and fiscal framework or to reduce interest rates prematurely. Interest rates would be maintained at high levels as long as was necessary.

The future of jobs in the short term depended on pay settlements. If pay increases were awarded, that were not warranted by the competitive position of firms, the result would be higher production costs and, ultimately, job losses.

One of the most important factors in the growth in employment had been the enthusiasm of overseas investors to put their money into British businesses. One influential factor in this change was the transformation of industrial relations.

In each of the past two years, the number of strikes was the lowest since 1935. The number of strikes in January was the lowest January figure for 60 years, and the lowest figure for any month since September 1974.

The lessons of the 1970s were clear: strikes destroyed jobs. Strikes, overmanning and restrictive practices exported British jobs overseas. Since 1979 that trend had been decisively reversed.

The transformation of industrial relations would never have been possible without the Government's trade union legislation. It was remarkable that the Opposition was committed to repealing it and returning to the status quo ante.

"They are committed to legislation which would once again put trade unions above the law. Britain's biggest behind her international competitors in some areas of education and training largely because of policies promoted by Labour in the 1960s and 1970s. These had reduced education standards and sought to bring everyone down to the same level of mediocrity."

They had reinforced trade union restrictive practices in training and raised levies on the best companies to subsidize the worst. The Government had

BUDGET DEBATE

started to correct those mistakes.

Record numbers of young people were staying on in full-time further education beyond 16 and there were more students than ever in higher education - more than a million last year. A higher proportion of young people in Britain had degrees compared with France, West Germany or Japan.

In 1987, employers' investment in training was at a record £18 billion, and employers trained 70 per cent more employees last year than in 1984. The benefits to the economy were to be seen in the fact that, despite an unprecedented period of economic growth, reported skill shortages last year were running at about half the level of the last comparable period in 1973.

The Training and Enterprise Councils being set up were possibly the most important change in the way that training was planned and delivered for nearly 30 years.

He hoped soon to announce that the first training councils had had their plans approved and were fully operational.

With the help of the councils, the Government would be pursuing three important priorities in the coming year. First, it would continue to encourage stronger links between business and education to turn out young people better prepared for work.

His department would invest more than £400 million in that process in the next three years. Second, the Government would continue to encourage people to take on apprenticeships for the training of 16 and 17-year-old school leavers which would reflect the needs of the local labour market.

He would also expect the councils to see how more young people could be motivated to want to train and come to expect training as a normal part of the employment. Some £2.5 billion would be available from the Government in the next three years to support that process. The councils would also be

expected to draw out substantial and increasing employer contributions.

Third, the Government would look to the councils to widen the opportunities for adults to develop and upgrade their skills, particularly those that were scarce. The Government would support that with more than £1 billion in each of the next three years.

Mr Tony Blair, chief Opposition spokesman on employment, said that the Budget took a long time to get to the point of addressing a number of small problems, but shrank from tackling the big problems.

The gap between the popularity of the Budget in the Conservative Party and its credibility in the country reminded everyone how distant the Government was from the people.

Help to the blind, to football trusts, value-added tax relief for small firms and relief on the workplace nurseries were all welcome, but the bigger questions were ignored.

The public wanted to know why, if privatization was supposed to lower prices, it was facing big increases in water and electricity charges. It wondered how, if there was talk of economic miracles, it faced rising mortgages and cuts in living standards.

It was puzzled why, after the poll tax was claimed to be fairer than rates, the scheme was attacked by even those who benefited and Conservative councillors chose to resign rather than implement it.

People wanted to know why the balance of payments deficit was the worst on record, why inflation was the highest of any of the main OECD countries. They did not understand how a Government in its second decade, after promising to bring down unemployment, had half a million more unemployed than it inherited.

On training of 16 to 19-year-olds, Britain was trailing behind Germany, Belgium and the United States. The CBI reported that the basic mathematical competence and foreign language skills of school leavers was well below that of other countries.

Call for passport changes

A CALL for the private sector to be involved in the issuing of passports was made at question time by Mrs Teresa Gorman (Belfast, C), who said that the season of "cherry blossom" Easter holidays, passport strikes and mayhem approached.

She urged Mr Richard Lacey, Minister for the Civil Service, to consider holding discussions with private organizations experienced in issuing and in making changes. They did so for credit agencies and banks and turned around applications within a maximum of 10 days for less than £2 an inquiry.

Mr Lacey replied that plans were well advanced for an agency in the passport service. However, the Home Secretary (Mr David Waddington) had made plain that he would make use of the relevant private sector experience where that would help to improve standards of service.

Chernobyl on the Channel

FEARS of a French Chernobyl-style disaster at one of the nuclear power stations on the Channel coast opposite England were expressed at question time by Mr Jonathan Aitken (Thanet, South, C).

He said that a report by the inspector of French nuclear power stations pointed out that in 20 years there was a one in twenty chance of a serious incident at one of the French nuclear power stations, 14 of which were within 30 miles of the English coast.

Mr Tony Blair, Under Secretary of State for Energy, said that he would make sure that Mr Aitken and other MPs with constituencies near by had a full explanation of the situation.

Playground safety Bill

A BILL that would lay down safety standards for equipment, layout and surfaces in children's play areas was introduced under the 10-minute-rule procedure.

Mr Robert Hughes (Harrow West, C), introducing the Safety in Children's Playgrounds Bill, said that it would ensure that all playgrounds in use in playgrounds complied with British safety standards.

Ministry to stay intact

MRS THATCHER has reported that the interests neither of consumers nor of the industry would be served by splitting the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. In a written reply, she said that the present arrangements ensured that ministerial responsibility for the food chain was covered from the point of production to the point of sale to the consumer.

School costs

TOTAL spending on assisted places for school pupils in the forthcoming financial year is estimated to be £61,926,000, Mr John MacGregor, Secretary of State for Education, said in a written reply. There will be 33,288 places available in England in the academic year 1990-91, he said.

New drivers

JUST OVER a million new full driving licences were issued last year, according to figures in a written reply from Mr Robert Atkins, Under Secretary of State for Transport. The exact figure was 1,044,338 compared with 1,000,611 in the previous year and 991,769 in 1987.

Parliament today

Commons (2.30): Questions: Education and Science; Prime Minister. Motion for the Easter adjournment and proceedings on the Confidentiality and (No 2) Bill when a majority can be raised.

Lords (2.30): Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Bill, committee, second day.

Coalfield productivity up 60%

PRODUCTIVITY in the Nottinghamshire coalfield had risen by 60 per cent, up from 2.9 tonnes a man-shift in 1985-86 to 4.64 tonnes in the first 11 months of 1989-90, Mr Tony Baldry, Under Secretary of State for Energy, said at questions.

The figures were welcomed by Mr Andrew Stewart (Sherwood, C) who said that, due to the skilled negotiators of the 20 per cent non-fossil-fuel quota for the generating industry. The true costs of nuclear power should be given to the House further.

Mr Baldry said that the scare stories of further huge contractions had been seriously over-stated.

Later, Mr Baldry said that the Government's commitment to the coal industry was demonstrated, not least last week, by the passing of the Coal Act which would provide between £5 to £7 billion of taxpayers' money to ensure that the overhang of past debts would be cleared,

ENERGY

Mr Geoffrey Lofthouse (Footscote and Castleford, Lab) said that when Mr Wakeham went to the coalfield he should tell the miners how many pits were going to close, and how many would shut because of the 20 per cent non-fossil-fuel quota for the generating industry. The true costs of nuclear power should be given to the House further.

Mr Baldry said that the scare stories of further huge contractions had been seriously over-stated.

Later, Mr Baldry said that the Government's commitment to the coal industry was demonstrated, not least last week, by the passing of the Coal Act which would provide between £5 to £7 billion of taxpayers' money to ensure that the overhang of past debts would be cleared,

which would ensure a productive and profitable coal industry.

Mr Frank Dobson, chief Opposition spokesman on energy, asked why the Government was proposing to stab Nottinghamshire miners in the back by pushing for coal imports through Immingham and by supporting PowerGen and National Power in building two gas-fired stations.

Eveo The Daily Telegraph had said that that would spell the end of the Nottinghamshire coalfield. That was a poor way to reward the increased productivity.

Mr Baldry said that he found Mr Dobson's remarks difficult to reconcile with the £2 million the Government invested in the industry every working day, and with the £5 billion to £7 billion it was providing to clear its overhang debt.

British Coal had succeeded in securing coal contracts with the new generators that would guarantee a stable market and guarantee income for the next three years.

Some sports clubs facing 'huge rise in their bills'

THE NEW uniform business rate was likely to increase total bills for some amateur sports clubs by up to 300 per cent, Lord Dean of Beswick (Lab) said during question time in the House of Lords.

Lord Heskest, Under Secretary of State for the Environment, questioned about the effects of the uniform business rate on amateur and professional sports clubs, said that the average rates bill for sports grounds, sports stadiums, playing fields and club houses in England would increase by 2.5 per cent.

Lord Dean of Beswick said

that he was surprised at the 2.5 per cent figure because he was concerned only with the effects of the uniform business rate on amateur sports.

"If you take the broad basis", he said, amateur sports, including rugby union, association football, bowls, tennis, athletics and others sports, the increase in percentage terms "is a minimum of 200 per cent and in some cases over 300 per cent."

"Bearing in mind that it appears that the Government is having a rethink about some of the sums that are having to be paid by people both on the uniform business rate as well as

the poll tax, would he ask the Secretary of State, in reviewing other areas concerning the new financial arrangements, to take on board some of the discrepancies that appear to be levied against sporting clubs?"

Lord Heskest said that the average rate bills for golf clubs, swimming pools and tennis facilities would rise by 20.5 per cent and for leisure and sports centres the average increase would be 30 per cent.

Local authorities would continue to have discretion to grant up to 100 per cent rate relief on properties occupied by non-profit-making bodies.

Lithuania keeps up guard after talks with Army

From Anatol Levin, Vilnius

A STANDSTILL agreement may have been reached between the Soviet Army and the Lithuanian leadership, members of which were yesterday cautiously optimistic about the possible opening of negotiations with Moscow.

Mr Romualdas Ozolas, the Deputy Prime Minister, said the agreement might "provide the basis for negotiations at a higher level", but he warned the country: "Don't drop your guard."

As if to reinforce his words, several military helicopters flew low over Vilnius yesterday afternoon, scattering unsigned leaflets denouncing independence and declaring that "the leaders of Sąjūdis seized power to fulfil their ambitions, and their aims are directed against the people".

The leaflets went on to invite people to a rally outside the parliament building at 4pm today.

Two teaching institutes belonging to the Soviet Communist Party were yesterday still occupied by troops, but students and teachers were allowed free access.

The troops, young conscripts, seemed rather bewildered and embarrassed by their role.

Talking to the press about the meeting yesterday morning between government representatives and two officers from the Soviet Army and the Ministry of the Interior troops, Mr Ozolas declared: "It is safe to say the most dangerous moment has passed."

The tension among Lithuanian leaders and deputies has dropped sharply since the report of an imminent seizure of parliament by the Soviet loyalist Yedinstvo movement which alarmed Mr Ozolas on Sunday night.

The two officers were sent by General Valentin Varenikov, who is with the troops in Lithuania and seems to be conducting a form of "field policy", presumably on behalf of the Kremlin.

Mr Ozolas said: "It seems that the upper echelons of the armed forces, who yesterday did not appear to have a clear line, do not want to take advantage of a situation that

they themselves created." He described as a "breakthrough" the fact that "both sides promised to take no action without informing the other".

The Soviet officers, meanwhile, raised the question of a Soviet soldier supposedly beaten up on Sunday in the town of Saule, and of other Soviet soldiers "insulted".

The Lithuanian government has set up a co-ordinating group to try to avoid clashes and "provocation". It is, however, not yet clear if representatives of the Army will take part in this on a regular basis.

Seemingly to have recovered from his pessimism of Sunday night, Mr Ozolas said that "talks about technicalities with the Army are not really about technicalities. They are an attempt to open up a larger question of the Army being here at all."

Lithuanian representatives were to leave last night for Moscow to meet US Senator Edward Kennedy, who is visiting the Soviet Union, and Mr Ozolas did not rule out that they might have talks with the Kremlin.

"I believe that contact with Mr Gorbachev already exists," he said, refusing to give details of what this might be.

The Soviet Army, having occupied symbolic positions in the city, and made the point that it must be consulted, seems to have no wish to take matters further for the moment.

Both sides are refraining from using their more dangerous weapons: on the Soviet side, overpowering military force; on the part of the Lithuanian leadership, the calling of mass demonstration against the Army's presence in the country.

Throughout Vilnius yesterday, life continued as normal. Even the students going into their institutes past the troops on duty did so without giving any appearance of facing serious danger.

The buildings occupied by the Army on the grounds that they belong to the Communist Party would only two years ago have been of great political importance in them-

selves. Today, if the Army's intention was, in part, to seize symbolic institutions, the symbolism seems empty given the Communist Party's decay.

The plenum of the Lithuanian party's central committee met yesterday under its president, Mr Algirdas Brazauskas, the Deputy Prime Minister, and invited local party organizations to make recommendations for a complete restructuring of the party, including a change of name.

Outside, fewer than 200 pickets from the Soviet Communist Party in Lithuania insisted that the central committee building belonged to their party. Most of them were very angry, but also elderly, poor and rather pathetic. It is not easy to picture them forming "militias" to bring down the Lithuanian government. Workers in any event yesterday denied that such militias were being set up by Yedinstvo.

Whether the present truce can hold depends on several factors. Given the clarity of the basic issue of Lithuania's declaration of independence, the grounds for a long-term compromise are not easily detectable, although, in the short term, issues like the creation of a Lithuanian border guard can be fudged.

Deputies here were pointing out yesterday that the Estonians have for some time had a system of guards checking goods passing in and out of their republic without this having caused conflict with Moscow.

The Kremlin is still trying to increase the deep splits already existing between the Sąjūdis leadership and that of the Lithuanian Communist Party, by keeping open its old lines of communication to Mr Brazauskas and the old ministers, rather than to Mrs Kazimiera Prunskienė, the new Prime Minister.

President Landsbergis complained about this to parliament yesterday morning, and Mr Zigmas Vaisvyla, a leading Sąjūdis deputy, said: "For two days Mr Brazauskas has been smiling - so perhaps he knows something from Moscow that we don't."

East and West find friendship in Kremlin



President Gorbachev and Senator Edward Kennedy sharing a joke in the Kremlin. Mr Kennedy, on his fourth visit to the Soviet Union, told reporters he would be discussing arms control, human rights and economic co-operation. He also planned to meet ordinary Soviet citizens

Voting blow to Kohl

From Ian Murray, Bonn

THE West German Chancellor, Herr Helmut Kohl, may have scored a personal triumph in the East German elections, but things are not going so well for him at home.

On Sunday, for the first time, his Christian Democrats (CDU) were beaten into second place in local elections in Schleswig-Holstein by the opposition Social Democrats (SPD). The Chancellor's rush to reunification appears to be an important reason for the narrow but significant defeat.

Along with the SPD, the Free Democrats - junior partners in the government coalition - could take comfort in the result, which pushed them up to 6.1 per cent, from 4.4 in the last local election four years ago, thus giving them seats in big city councils.

In the Bavarian local elections the previous Sunday, the SPD also did well, winning a number of councils from the Christian Social Union, the CDU's right-wing Bavarian sister party. However, elections there were voting in ignorance of the ultimate result in East Germany, probably believing the predictions of an SPD victory. The SPD in Bavaria could well have benefited from the belief that victory in the East would make it the party of the future.

Last Sunday, however, voters knew the Chancellor and not the SPD had won in the East, and this might have well been expected to sway the voters in Schleswig-Holstein back to the CDU. For it was only in unusual circumstances two years ago in the state elections that the people here turned away from the CDU, which had ruled there since the foundation of West Germany 37 years before.

The SPD's success then undoubtedly owed a good deal to the fact that the CDU was discredited by suspicions that its lead candidate, Herr Uwe Barschel, had been involved in a "dirty tricks" campaign against the opposition.

Herr Björn Engholm, the present SPD Prime Minister - the man attacked in the "dirty tricks" campaign - has been a high-profile, populist leader. Again, in normal circumstances, his more radical policies could well have frightened voters back to the CDU. The fact that this did not happen points to local concern about reunification.

There are also two views about the way the West should respond to the crisis: on the one hand, too many warnings from Western leaders could weaken Mr Gorbachev's position; on the other, threats of dire consequences from the West could help Mr Gorbachev to push the secession legislation through the Soviet Parliament.

But Albanian human rights activists say the suspension of regional police and the takeover by Serbia is bound to strengthen Albanian resistance.

Honecker treason charge dropped

From Anne McElvoy, East Berlin

EAST GERMANY'S state prosecutor announced yesterday that charges of treason and conspiracy levelled at Herr Erich Honecker, the former leader, and three leading former Politburo members, are to be dropped.

Herr Hans-Jürgen Joseph said there were no grounds in East German law to support the charges, the most serious of the accusations against the former leadership.

Herr Joseph said further charges of corruption and abuse of office would be pursued against Herr Honecker, Herr Günter Mittag, his economic chief, and Herr Erich Mielke, head of state security.

Herr Joachim Herrmann, the former media chief who was facing treason charges only, will be released from prison in the next few days.

After the announcement, Mr Ingmar Wagner, the leader of the Danish Communist Party, renewed his offer of sanctuary in Copenhagen to Herr Honecker and his wife, Margot, the former Education Minister.

The couple are known to be anxious to leave East Germany but will not be given exit visas until the remaining charges have been examined.

An attempt to move them from the vicarage outside East Berlin to a government house in the country at the weekend failed when residents attacked the van carrying the couple.

Legal experts have expected that the charge of treason was not tenable within existing East German law which defines the crime as "conspiring to overthrow the socialist order in the state".

Many East Germans believe that the charge, which was brought at the height of ill-feeling towards the former leader, was a sop to public anger and was never intended to come to court. Meanwhile,

attempts to form a grand coalition to govern East Germany were hindered yesterday when Herr Ibrahim Böhm, the leader of the Social Democratic Party, relinquished his posts within the party pending the clarification of allegations that he was a Stasi informant.

Similar charges were denied last week by Herr Lothar de Maizière, the leader of the Christian Democrats, the strongest party in the new Parliament.

Der Spiegel, the West German magazine, has alleged that Herr Böhm, a well-known opponent before the reforms, co-operated with the state security service for many years under the codenames Paul Bongartz and Dr Rohloff.

Herr Böhm denies the charges and has instituted legal proceedings to clear his name.

But it is thought that the move will further delay coalition talks scheduled to begin on Thursday.

Herr Volker Rühe, the secretary of the Christian Democratic Union in West Germany, yesterday urged the East German parties to put the accusations aside and build a government as soon as possible.

"It would only be a success for the methods of the state security service itself if people allow this to delay them in forming a government," he said.

Herr Rainer Eppelmann, the leader of the conservative Democratic Awakening, yesterday said that he believed the denials of both politicians and spoke of "an atmosphere of hysteria and backstabbing" in the country.

Herr Eppelmann was hounded by the Stasi for many years as a dissident priest and as such is one of the few East German politicians to be considered above suspicion of complicity.

Moscow seeks firmer Seoul ties

From Mary Dejevsky, Moscow

THE Soviet Union and South Korea, which established consular offices in each other's capitals last year, are accelerating progress towards full diplomatic relations, it was announced yesterday.

The announcement was made by Mr Kim Young Sam, co-chairman of South Korea's ruling Democratic Liberal Party, at the end of a week-long visit to the Soviet Union, which he described as inaugurating "a completely new chapter" in relations between the two countries.

As a transitional stage Moscow and Seoul are to establish full consular relations.

Although the visit was technically private - at the invitation of the Institute of World Economics and International Relations - it included meetings with Politburo member Mr Aleksandr Yakovlev, the Central Committee chairman for international affairs, Mr Yevgeni Primakov, the chairman of one of the chambers of the Supreme Soviet, a deputy Soviet industry minister and many other senior officials.

Mr Kim's party included a large number of South Korean officials and businessmen.

There were reports - which Mr Kim would not confirm - that he had also been received by President Gorbachev. Given the lack of diplomatic relations between the two countries, such a meeting would be highly unusual.

Moscow is believed to be particularly interested in expanding relations with South Korea because of its status as an underdeveloped country which quickly became a manufacturing success. The fact that its products tend to be cheaper and generally less sophisticated than Japanese products adds to its attraction as an economic partner for the Soviet Union.

The current pause in South Korea's economic fortunes is

believed to have increased Seoul's interest in tapping what could be a vast Soviet market.

Members of South Korea's business community have been visiting eastern Siberia in recent months to gauge investment and development opportunities there.

A major obstacle to improved relations between Moscow and Seoul in the past has been Moscow's support for the North Korean leader, President Kim Il Sung, which has been coupled with strident condemnation of the US military presence in the South. Mr Gorbachev's "new political thinking" has reduced the role of ideology in foreign policy, and Moscow's decision to take part in the 1988 Olympic Games brought tentative warming to the South.

The communiqué issued at the end of Mr Kim Young Sam's visit to Moscow stipulated "nonetheless that relations between South Korea and the Soviet Union were 'not intended to harm the interests of third countries'. He even hinted that Moscow might have a mediating influence in the conflict between North and South Korea as the 40th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War approaches.

The improvement of relations with South Korea seems to have been given priority by the Soviet leadership over the past year, as attempts to court Japan came to nothing and hopes of a rapid change for the better in relations with China were frustrated by the gradual return to ideological and economic orthodoxy following the Tiananmen Square killings last June.

Bulgaria and Mongolia, which also had relations only with North Korea, have in the past week announced their intention of normalizing relations with the South.

US puts treaties on the line to deter use of force

By Michael Evans, Defence Correspondent

PRESIDENT BUSH is prepared to sacrifice prospective arms control treaties and trade agreements with the Soviet Union if Moscow takes forceful action against Lithuania, according to a highly placed US official yesterday.

Despite the apparent easing of tension in Vilnius yesterday after the talks between senior Soviet Army officers and Lithuanian officials, the US considers that the action taken so far by Mr Gorbachev is following "a dangerous direction".

While the British Government is taking a more sanguine view of Mr Gorbachev's dilemma in dealing with the secessionists in Lithuania, Washington is now ready to adopt a much tougher approach.

So far Mr Bush has kept his public statements restrained in the hope that Mr Gorbachev would keep his promise to resolve the Lithuanian problem through dialogue, not force.

However, the US official made it clear yesterday that in Washington's eyes, the definition of force was not just "shooting people in the

streets". He said: "The Soviets may interpret force in different ways."

"But using tanks to put Moscow back in control of Lithuania would be viewed as force in our eyes." So, too, would a declaration of martial law or a state of emergency.

The official said: "There might not be much force used but it would have the same effect on the independence process in Lithuania." Any such move by Moscow would "definitely have serious implications for our relations with the Soviet Union".

The official said it would not mean a state of "deep freeze" between Washington and Moscow. The US did not want "to make life difficult for Mr Gorbachev" but the atmosphere of trust that had grown between Mr Bush and Mr Gorbachev would be damaged.

Any attempt to crush Lithuania's fight for self-determination would have a "knock-on effect" on the arms control negotiations, now making good progress, and on the two-plus-four talks on German reunification being held between the US, the

Soviet Union, Britain, France and the two Germans.

It would also slow down the Conventional Forces in Europe talks in Vienna, and that would rule out a 35-nation summit planned for the end of the year to sign an arms treaty and to discuss the future security of Europe. American trade agreements with the Soviet Union would have to come under scrutiny because, under US legislation, trade with Moscow was linked to human rights, the official said.

British officials understand Mr Gorbachev's difficulties. He has legislation before the Supreme Soviet which would create the mechanism for secession by the republics and he needs to show a strong hand in dealing with Lithuania's unilateral declaration.

There are also two views about the way the West should respond to the crisis: on the one hand, too many warnings from Western leaders could weaken Mr Gorbachev's position; on the other, threats of dire consequences from the West could help Mr Gorbachev to push the secession legislation through the Soviet Parliament.

But Albanian human rights activists say the suspension of regional police and the takeover by Serbia is bound to strengthen Albanian resistance.

Albanian suspects rounded up

From Dassa Trevisan, Belgrade

SERBIAN police who took over direct control in the Kosovo region began rounding up Albanian suspects alleged to have used the poison scare to launch an attack against the Serbian population, while 2,500 armed Serbian policemen joined another Serbian force of 2,000 stationed in the region since last month.

Mr Radmilo Bogdanovic, the Serbian police chief, said police units were now in charge in all towns and settlements in the province.

At least 25 Albanians were arrested in the main hospital in Pristina, but many more are believed to have been rounded up, among them the medical staff in the hospital including some prominent Albanian doctors who have been treating the Albanians for suspected poisoning.

"We are identifying organizers of assaults against the Serbs as well as the perpetrators of the alleged poisoning among Albanians," Mr Bogdanovic said.

The regional police chief,

Mr Yusuf Karakushi, himself an Albanian who was largely regarded as a Serbian stooge, resigned after the Serbs accused Albanian policemen of failing to protect them and even joining the angry crowd in beating up the Serbs.

The regional presidency said in a statement the situation threatened to become tragic and appealed to young people not to listen to propaganda from either side.

A show of force was evident as Serbia took control over security while the hardline Serbian leadership went out of its way to reassure the Serbs that it would stamp out separatism. It pledged to go ahead with its programme to bring in 100,000 Serbian settlers by the summer while expelling Albanian immigrants.

Western governments have already warned that such a move would have serious international repercussions, while the United Nations High Commission for Refugees has demanded further information, leaving no doubt of the serious view that would

be taken should the threat be carried out.

The mystery over the illness which has gripped 2,000 Albanians has however still not been cleared. Yugoslavia's federal government announced over the weekend there was no evidence to support the claim of poisoning and accused the Albanian separatists of spreading rumours to stir up popular unrest.

Serbian politicians spoke of a new kind of psychological warfare intent on plunging the country into civil war.

But Albanian human rights activists say the suspension of regional police and the takeover by Serbia is bound to strengthen Albanian resistance.

They also discussed the future shape of Europe and the pace of further developments in the European Community.

Stalemate over European union

By Michael Knipe, Diplomatic Correspondent

MRS Margaret Thatcher and M. Michel Rocard, the French Prime Minister, agreed to differ during talks at Downing Street yesterday on the question of European integration.

But the talks, which lasted two and half hours including lunch, were described as friendly and constructive and included discussion of the prospects of closer Anglo-French co-operation.

The French Government is seeking a closer relationship with Britain to counter the extra weight that Germany will have as a result of the unification process.

The two Prime Ministers welcomed the progress made on co-operation since Mrs Thatcher's meeting with President Mitterrand in January and agreed that discussions on this should continue.

They also discussed the



M. Rocard: Seeking an accord by 1993

with a view to some form of agreement by the start of 1993. The French hope is that there should be agreement on establishing economic and monetary union by the middle of 1991.

With this in mind, the French would favour the early convening of an inter-governmental conference on monetary integration.

They would also like to see its scope widened to include the issue of political union.

The British Government is sceptical about trying to bring forward the proposed inter-governmental conference.

It has agreed to it starting at the end of this year but still thinks that is premature.

There are also differing views as to whether tentative agreement on the issues involved should be reached before such a conference gets underway. "You don't need to have a consensus to start such a conference but you do need to end it," said one Whitehall source.

Mrs Thatcher reiterated her view that the European Community should not move in the direction of greater centralized control and less democracy at the very time the greater part of the world was moving away from such ideas.

The Downing Street talks centred on developments in Europe, German unification and its consequences for the European Community as a whole.

Earlier M Rocard had talks with Mr Douglas Hurd, the Foreign Secretary. He also met Mr Tim King, the Secretary of State for Defence, and Mr John Major, the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Call for EC-wide spending curbs

From Peter Gullford, Brussels

FINANCE experts in the European Community are calling for treaty rules to control government spending as an indispensable part of the bloc's economic and monetary union, it emerged from Brussels officials yesterday.

The confidential recommendation, drawn up by the EC's powerful "monetary committee" - a think-tank of senior government officials including treasury experts and deputy governors of the EC's 12 central banks - is understood to say budgetary discipline should be reinforced by the EC's founding Treaty of Rome.

The treaty should incorporate the ideas of first correcting and then avoiding excessive budget deficits," said

one source close to the committee, adding: "We will propose budgetary discipline as an element of the (EC) constitution."

The proposal will draw a mixed reaction from the Government, which is deeply sceptical about full economic and monetary union (EMU) and vehemently opposed to any attempt to enlarge the EC Treaty to accommodate it.

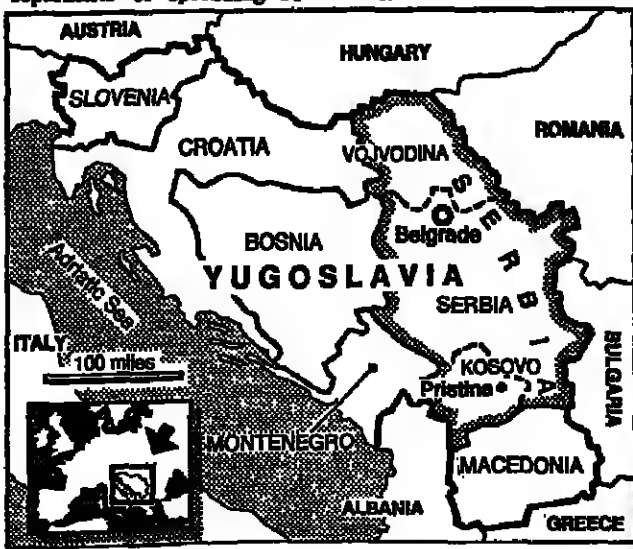
Mrs Thatcher approves of nations adopting tight spending controls similar to those in Britain, but she is determined to fight the formation of central rules, which she believes would be an unacceptable loss of government control over budgetary policy.

The report from the monetary committee appears to conflict with the views of the European Commission, which

takes a more conciliatory line in a paper about the costs and benefits of EMU. The Commission's report backs the concept of a single European currency, the ECU, but says governments need only be encouraged to co-ordinate their budget policies along looser guidelines, rather than be legally bound by centrally enforced rules.

EC Finance Ministers will discuss the apparently contradictory reports at Ashford Castle, County Mayo, in the Irish Republic on Saturday.

The Irish Government, which holds the EC presidency, has played down the apparently conflicting attitudes on measures to tighten governments' spending. A spokesman for the presidency admitted yesterday, however, that "there was still a battle to be fought".



Centre right claims poll triumph in Hungary

From Ernest Beck, Budapest

HUNGARY'S centre-right opposition party, the Democratic Forum, emerged yesterday as the country's most popular party in the first free election in more than 45 years.

With 60 per cent of the vote counted, it captured 25 per cent of the vote while its closest rival, the radical Alliance of Free Democrats, drew 20 per cent.

Results were delayed 24 hours by a computer breakdown.

Dr Jozsef Antall, president of the Democratic Forum and the likely new prime minister, said unequivocally: "We can qualify as the winner from these results and see in the second round of voting a chance to improve. This will definitely put us in the position of forming a new government."

However, Mr Janos Kis, a leader of the Free Democrats, also held out a possibility of leading after the second round.

"We are confident we can overtake the Forum when the final mandates for parliamentary seats are decided," he said.

The Smallholders' Party, which advocates a radical land reform programme, was in third place with almost 13 per cent of the vote, less than expected but enough to make it a power broker in forming a coalition government.

Mr Rezső Nyers, president of the Socialist Party, said it was ready to join a coalition with the Democratic Forum if asked.

However, Dr Antall said his party's closest allies were the Smallholders and the Christian Democrats, and both the Democratic Forum and the Free Democrats have ruled out any Socialist Party role in the government.

The Socialists, the break-away reform wing of the old Communist Party, made a surprisingly strong showing with 10 per cent.

But there was an embarrassing defeat for Mr Imre Pozsgay, the party's most outspoken reformer and once the country's most popular politician, who came in third behind fiercely anti-communist candidates from the Democratic Forum and the League of Young Democrats.

Mr Pozsgay said he was disappointed but not surprised. "I knew all the time I was a strategic target of many parties, so I had to reckon with such a result," he said.

Hardship ahead on the tortuous road to freedom

From Ernest Beck, Budapest

THE newly elected government of Hungary will have little time to celebrate the return to democracy as it will inherit an economic mess brought on by years of poor central planning, communist corruption, and suffocating trade ties to the Soviet Union.

Although the late Kadar years did see small openings towards a market economy, which made Hungary the showcase of Soviet satellites, economic planners began borrowing heavily to import consumer goods from the West in a desperate attempt to keep the population happy and under control.

The leftovers were poorly invested in the kind of rust-built industry always favoured by Stalin.

Now Hungary is saddled with a £13 billion foreign debt, rampant inflation of at least 20 per cent and about 50,000 unemployed. That could surge to almost 400,000 if the decrepit state factories are shut, something which the interim administration hesitated to do.

Communist policies have also produced an average monthly salary of \$110 (£68) and about one-fourth of the population living below the poverty level. All solutions will be painful but the big parties, expected to emerge victorious from yesterday's general election, are committed to capitalism and the free-market system.

Only the pace of change is in dispute. While the centre-right Democratic Forum urges a "cautious privatization" and wants the state to continue stewardship of more than 30 per cent of the economy, the more radical Alliance of Free Democrats says the state should quickly fade away and the tax structure be overhauled to allow Hungary's entrepreneurial skills to flourish.

"We need to make Hungary a nation of shopkeepers," one

Mr Pozsgay will face a run-off election on April 8 as will Mr Gyula Horn, the popular Socialist foreign minister who was placed first in his district but who did not attain the necessary 50 per cent.

Orthodox Marxists of the Hungarian Socialist Workers party fared badly, achieving less than 4 per cent of the vote nationwide, which means they will not be represented in Parliament.

To many constituencies voters appeared to favour certain personalities and independent candidates and split their two votes between these and parties on the constituency and county levels.

Mr Miklos Nemeth, the outgoing Prime Minister, was easily elected as an independent candidate while Mrs Anna Petrosovits, president of the Social Democratic Party, landed in sixth place. Mr Bela Kiraly, the commander-in-chief of the National Guard in 1956 and a popular hero who turned his forces against the invading Russian troops, came in first as an independent but will also face a run-off.

It is expected that only about half of the 386 seats in the new Parliament will be decided in the first round. Many smaller parties were eliminated, but a cluster, including the Christian Democrats and the Young Democrats, which both received about 8 per cent, will have candidates in the second round.

The final apportionment of seats will be known only then, as it must include 58 seats on a national list based on constituency results.

Voters confounded theories about a split in urban and rural preferences. The Budapest-based Free Democrats, founded by intellectuals and former dissidents, took 28 per cent in the capital, barely equal to the Democratic Forum which had virtually conceded Budapest and had concentrated instead on reinforcing its already strong position in the countryside. Eighteen of 32 Free Democratic candidates in Budapest won or will face a run-off.

The strong showing of the Democratic Forum, although largely predicted in the polls, may be attributed to its appeals to national identity which might have gained support during the clashes between Hungarians and Romanians in Transylvania.

economic adviser to the Free Democrats says.

Hungary must also start making things the world wants. A recent survey showed that only 30 per cent of the country's products are of sufficiently high quality to be sold in the West.

How long this transformation will take may be crucial to the nation's economic survival. There are already abundant signs of decay: 10,000 workers at the state-owned Ikarus bus and coach manufacturer were suspended last month and all production facilities closed after the Government ordered a stop to rouble exports, and 70,000 miners are working without pay because the state mining firm has nothing left in the bank.

At the same time, money is flowing in from the West in the form of more than 1,000 new joint ventures and a \$1 billion bail-out from the International Monetary Fund. However, the IMF money could be cut off if the new government reneges on promises to keep the bloated budget deficit under control and to change the rouble surplus to a deficit.

A new trade agreement signed with Moscow a few days ago should help in ease the imbalance, but reducing the budget deficit will be harder because the public is used to cheap subsidized services and housing. Changing them too quickly could prompt social unrest and threaten the fledgling government's stability.

Although communism will certainly be ended, the Government must move to stop old communist managers from making off with profits by selling out bankrupt state firms. Many dubious holding companies have been formed with communist heads in control. They transferred shares to their name before selling them to foreign buyers.



Dr Jozsef Antall, president of the Democratic Forum and the likely new prime minister, flashing the victory sign at a pre-results news conference in Budapest. Early results pointed to a strong lead for the forum

Elections fail to overthrow old disorder

Budapest — It was a case of East meeting West on Sunday at Hungary's first democratic voting on a nation-wide scale in more than 40 years. Elections followed Western rules of fair play, but compilation of results was in the best Soviet bloc tradition of maddening incompetence.

Hungarians like to consider themselves closer to modern Western Europe than Eastern Europe, which they derisively call "The Balkans" or "Asia".

But the election and its aftermath appeared to show that the nation had some way to go in its aspirations to Western efficiency.

While international monitors expressed satisfaction with the fairness of the voting, the reporting of results was occasionally reminiscent of vaudeville.

East Germany, which staged the Soviet bloc's first democratic national elections on March 18, met the expectations of Western reporters by providing projections shortly after polls closed. Provisional final results were available five hours after the last vote was cast, with the official vote count tallied by next morning.

But the East Germans had West German computers and know-how. The Hungarians

had modern computers but appeared incapable of using them. Gleaming banks of computer terminals were on display both at election committee headquarters at Parliament and in the election studio of state television, which went live shortly after polls closed for a scheduled 24-hour broadcast, complete with an inspiring musical theme and jazzy graphics.

But computer screens remained blank. Either because of problems or just plain distrust of modern technology, election officials decided in the last minutes to tally ballots cast by more than five million people by hand and use the computers only to cross-check final results.

That, in turn, emasculated the television's computer system, which had been partially depending on feeds from the election committee's network. Red-faced commentators mumbled excuses, reading hand-scratched results of frequently obscure candidates that left viewers baffled.

Half-hearted attempts to draw on the computer were often embarrassing. A panel of experts, attempting to explain inconclusive and misleading computer data, gave up yesterday. (AP)



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Hawke poised to retain power with reduced majority

From Christopher Thomas, Sydney

MR BOB HAWKE, the Australian Prime Minister, seemed set last night to retain power with a parliamentary majority of at least two seats after Saturday's election.

The best he can hope for, it seems, is a majority of six in the 148-member House of Representatives, although Labor pollsters privately do not expect it to be that high.

The final outcome in several marginal seats will not be known until the end of this week, leaving Mr Hawke in charge of a caretaker government until victory is certain. The opposition Liberal Party refused to concede defeat, saying there was still an outside chance of a hung parliament.

Postal votes and preference allocations are being included in neck-and-neck contests in six constituencies that are yet to be declared, with results expected tomorrow or on Thursday.

Voting was again postponed at two small polling stations in the marginal Queensland constituency of Kennedy because of flooding. The polls may open today. The Liberals and the governing Labor Party have filled the area with workers in an attempt to capture the support of the remaining few hundred people waiting to cast a vote, in case they can tip the scales.

Mr Andrew Peacock, the

Liberal leader, acknowledged that his chances of taking power were slim, based on assessments of the outstanding seats.

The Australian Electoral Commission has told Mr Hawke that it expects him to retain power with a majority of at least two seats, clearing the way for him to stay on as caretaker Prime Minister. The tally yesterday was: Labor 73, Liberal-National Party coalition 68, Independent 1.

The National Party, whose strength has fallen from 18 seats to 14, is in a crisis as it awaits the expected defeat of its leader, Mr Charles Blunt, in a still undecided contest with an Independent.

There is speculation that the party, whose strength lies in rural areas, may merge with the Liberals to create a united conservative movement. National Party MPs have provisionally arranged to elect a new leader on Friday.

Although Mr Peacock is likely to be reconfirmed as Liberal leader, it is clear that he will face an early leadership contest, although no obvious successor has emerged. The Australian Democrats, too, are looking for a leader after the formal resignation of Mrs Janine Haines after her electoral defeat.

The Labor Party is in turmoil after the manning it suffered in Victoria, where the

state government is unpopular.

Mr Hawke's priority as he prepares to form a new government will be to stop Australia slipping into recession. Both he and Mr Paul Keating, the Treasurer — who is expected to become deputy Prime Minister — have raised expectations of an early reduction in interest rates.

Mr Keating said that as soon as the election result was "unambiguous" he would inform the Reserve Bank that the Government believed interest rates should be lowered.

Labor strategists believe they have achieved the near impossible by getting the Government re-elected when the economy is in poor shape. They hope that by the time of the next election, due in three years if the Government runs a full course, the economy will be stronger and Labor will be well placed for a popularity revival, just as the Menzies Government recovered after being jolted in 1961.

The Liberal Party's challenge will be to settle the leadership question. Mr Peacock's poor performance clearly played a pivotal role in the party's failure to capitalize on Labor's vulnerability, and yet there is no obvious successor. The leadership dilemma could continue to dampen its electoral prospects well into the 1990s.

Swiss hunt £12m raiders

From Alan McGregor, Geneva

THE 40 staff of the foreign exchange department at the main Geneva office of the Union Bank of Switzerland were interrogated by police yesterday after foreign currency worth £12.5 million was stolen on Sunday.

According to Mr Henri Munz, the bank's manager, the four armed men who entered the bank through a staff entrance after tying up and gagging two unarmed security men, went straight to the foreign exchange depart-

ment. They disconnected the alarm system and obtained the keys and codes, enabling them to open 12 safes.

They took banknotes, mostly in Swiss and French francs, Deutschmarks and sterling, leaving untouched stacks of Italian lire and African currencies. Mr Munz denied that the bank's security system was obsolete. He said the possibility of an inside job "could not be excluded".

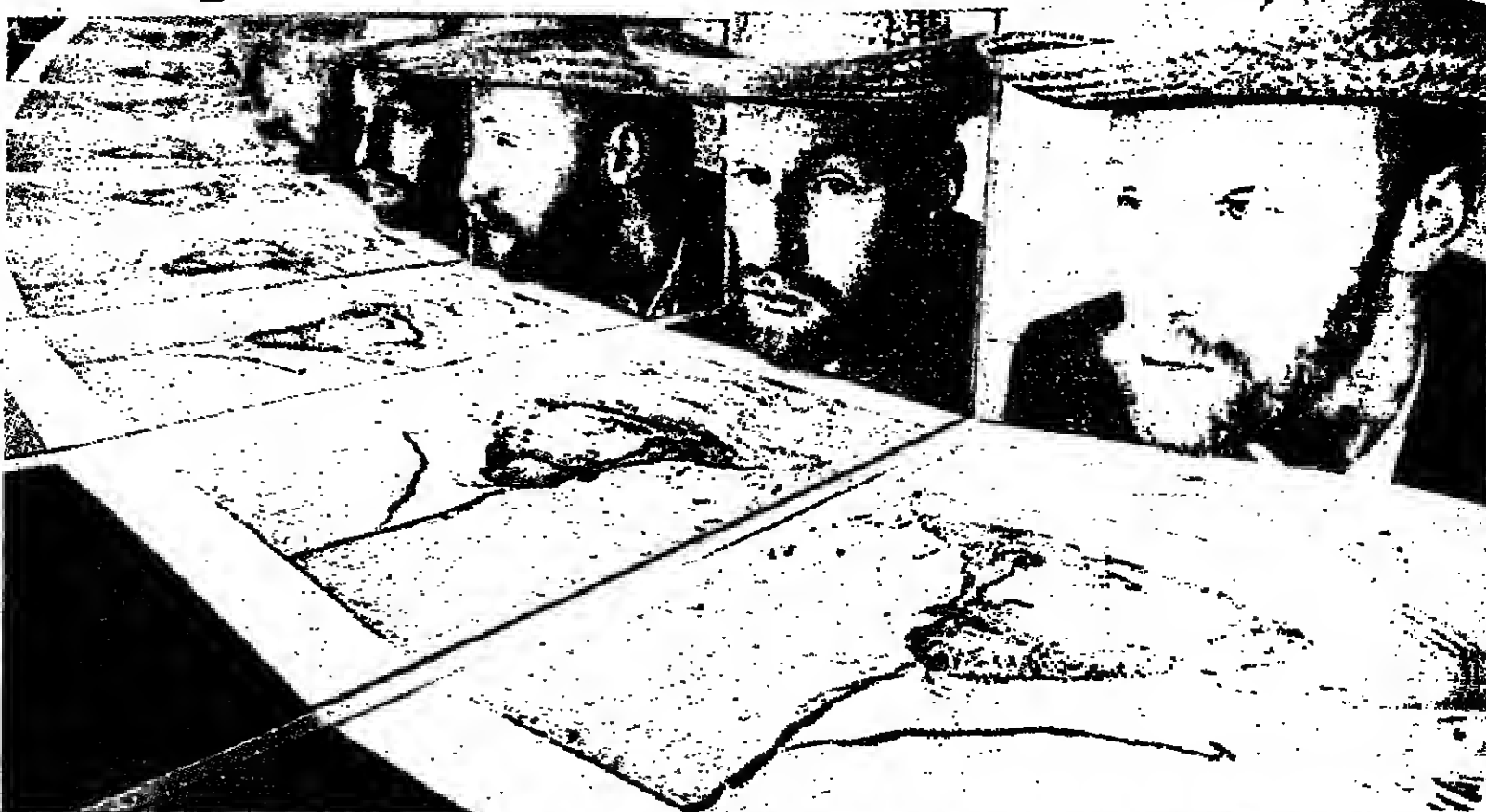
On Friday the bank had received "a large sum" in

banknotes from a foreign central bank. The robbery was discovered about two hours after the raiders struck when a bank computer programmer arrived to start work. He found staff members gagged and bound.

The leader of the gang was described as impeccably dressed and "wearing an expensive suit with a tie".

Police believe the robbers were across the frontier and well into France long before the alarm was given.

Impressions of Van Gogh's tragic life



Reflections on glory: Donald Bonema, a Dutch actor who bears a startling resemblance to Vincent van Gogh, contemplating a self-portrait by the painter before the opening of an exhibition in Amsterdam this week to mark the artist's death by suicide, at the age of 37, 100 years ago

Mugabe deputy's guards 'wounded rival candidate'

From Jan Raath, Harare

BODYGUARDS of Mr Simon Muzenda, Zimbabwe's Vice-President, were yesterday accused of shooting and wounding an opposition candidate who is considered almost certain to win a seat from President Mugabe's ruling Zanu (PF) Party in tomorrow's election.

Mr Patrick Kombayi, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (Zum) candidate in the city of Gweru, is recovering after two hours of surgery on Saturday in which at least two bullets were removed from his stomach and another from his leg.

The shooting was the latest incident in the rarely publicized violence of the election campaign.

Two conflicting accounts of the shooting have emerged. The first is from Mr Mugabe, who told cheering partisan rally crowds around Harare on Sunday that the incident had been provoked by Mr Kombayi who, he alleged, had shot at the tyres of a lorry belonging to Mr Muzenda and then,

helped by other Zum supporters, had set the vehicle on fire. Zanu (PF) officials had retaliated by shooting Mr Kombayi, the President claimed.

The other account came yesterday from Mr Jerry Nyamubaya, aged 32, Zum's director of elections. With his face swollen, his upper lip split and his right eye severely bloodshot, he said that Mr Muzenda's government-supplied bodyguards had ambushed Mr Kombayi and shot him, his driver and four other Zum supporters.

"There is no way his (Muzenda's) bodyguards would have acted without instructions," Mr Nyamubaya alleged. He also claimed that he had been abducted by the same bodyguards, beaten up, shot at on a lonely spot outside the city, and left for dead.

Mr Edgar Tekere, the chairman of Zum, which is mounting the substantive opposition to Zanu (PF), said at the same press conference that the in-

cident was devised by the ruling party to "finish off" Mr Kombayi.

Officials of two independent election monitoring groups which are drawing up reports on the Gweru incident, but who asked not to be identified, said their investigations appeared to confirm Mr Nyamubaya's version and the shooting of six Zum supporters.

One of them pointed out, however, that "it is extremely difficult to know what the truth is."

"You can hardly find anyone in Gweru you could call an impartial observer."

What can be said with some certainty of the situation in the fear-battered townships of Gweru is that Mr Kombayi has taken full control of the city with a well-organized army of youths equipped with walkie-talkies, so preventing the powerful Zanu (PF) Vice-President from conducting anything but a peripheral campaign in the city.

Gondoliers beat Venice drought

From Richard Bassett, Rome

THE VENETIAN authorities expressed renewed concern yesterday at the falling water level in Venice's canals. At the same time, the reappearance of algae in the lagoons has shocked the city's environmental officers.

Several of the smaller canals in the poorer part of the city behind the Church of San Trovaso near the Accademia are impassable as the result of the drought during one of the mildest Italian winters on record.

Along the larger canals, the decreasing water level has meant a comeback for gondolas, rather than bigger boats.

Because the depth of the canals depends on the great rivers of the Venetian plain, the lagoons cannot compensate for drops in water levels within the city.

The lack of rain and snow in the Venetian and eastern Alps has dried up the Tadrimento, Piave and Isonzo Rivers.

Usually the rivers are by now a pale blue, but even last

month they were little more than parched white paths of cracked limestone.

In addition to the drought, Venice's environmentalists yesterday were confronted with the reappearance of algae on the eastern fringes of the lagoons.

The warmth of the last few weeks has enabled the algae to spread in proportions only seen in summer.

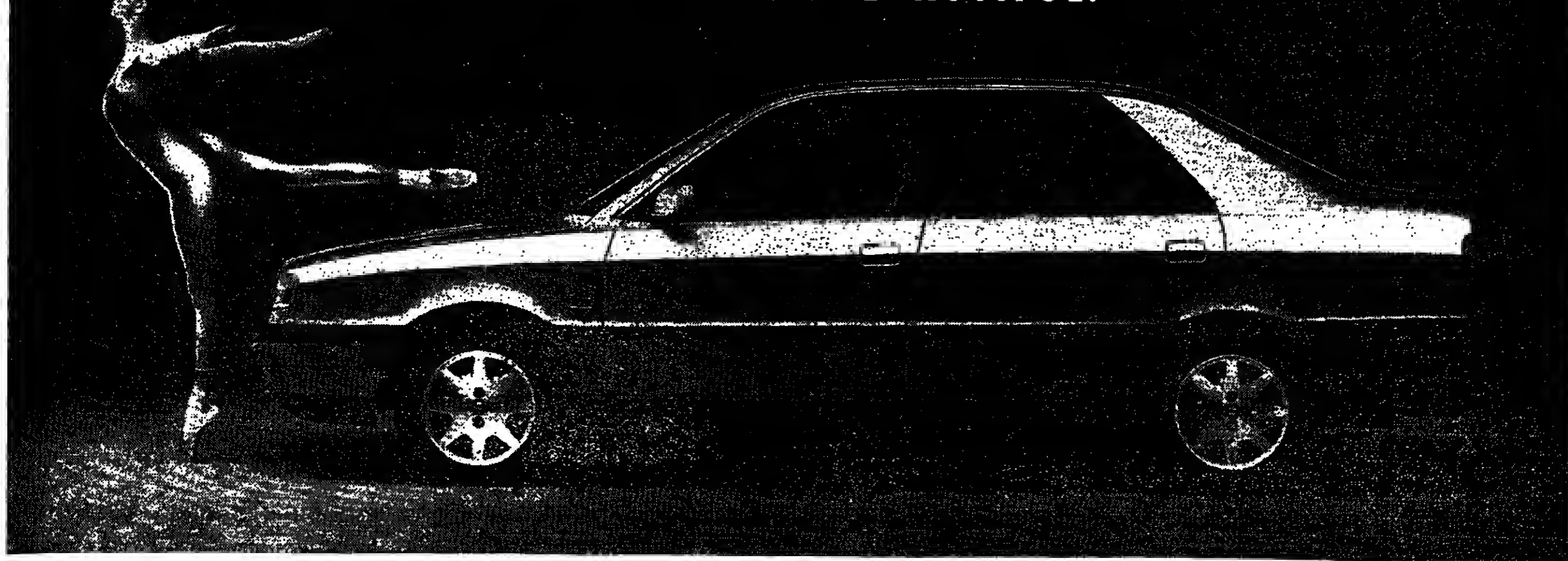
Last August, algae virtually destroyed the Italian Adriatic tourist trade by preventing would-be bathers from entering the sea.

Dr Erminio Chiozzotto, Venice's chief environmental official, warned yesterday that this summer could see a return of the algae plague.

"We desperately need more funding to spray the algae with suitable chemicals and disperse it," Dr Chiozzotto said.

He said Venice could become an ecological disaster zone if prompt action was not taken to deal with the problem.

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Israeli desert city fosters pioneer spirit of Soviet Jews

From Richard Owen
Beersheba

AS YITZHAK RAGER, the ebullient Mayor of Beersheba, comes striding out of his office, an aide rushes up with a sheaf of airmail letters on cheap Soviet stationery.

"Look," says Mr Rager, seizing the bundle and rifling through it. "I get 2,000 of these a month, all from Soviet Jews considering living here in the Negev Desert. You know why? Because I write to them in Russian and I say to them: 'If you want to help build the Jewish state, don't go to Tel Aviv or Haifa - come to Beersheba and be a pioneer.'"

The decision by Malev, the Hungarian airline to suspend flights for Soviet Jews via Beersheba, has again fuelled controversy over the settling of Soviet Jews in the occupied territories.

But Israeli officials hope such

hitches will prove temporary. The flow of Soviet immigrants shows little sign of abating and estimates suggest that hundreds of thousands of Russian olim (immigrants) will arrive over the next two to three years. So far, most are going not to the West Bank, but to towns in Israel proper.

For Israeli planners the problem is not so much the political fallout of West Bank settlements but the profound impact Russian immigrants seem bound to have - and to some extent are having already - on Israeli society and politics.

At the Jewish settlement of Efrat, near Bethlehem on the West Bank, Mr Boh Lang, the settlement's US-born administrator, says that although the great wave of Soviet immigrants is "a dream come true", there is a limit to what a settlement like Efrat can do.

It is, in effect, a middle-class dormitory suburb for Jerusalem and the average family home there

costs \$94,000. No Russian immigrant, assuming he can find a job in the first place, can hope to obtain a mortgage of more than \$31,000 at the most.

The only settlements willing to take in Russians at low cost are either ideological or ultra-religious, and most Soviet Jews are barely aware of their Jewishness. As a result, many of the thousands who have arrived in recent months are confused and disappointed.

They come, President Herzog has noted, as refugees from Russian anti-Semitism, and are greeted with dances and flowers at Tel Aviv airport. But then they find there is no work for them and no housing. Many end up staying with friends and relatives in the crowded coastal strip on either side of Tel Aviv, hoping for the best.

For Mr Rager, as for other go-ahead mayors in "development towns" in Israel proper, the an-

swer is simple: attract the Soviet immigrants, nearly half of whom have high professional qualifications, to the outer fringes of the Jewish state and inspire them with enthusiasm for the Zionist cause.

More prosaically, Mr Rager, a larger-than-life businessman who was persuaded by demoralized Beersheba citizens to stand for office and revive the town, believes he can provide the two key ingredients missing elsewhere: housing and work.

For the privilege of building the future, new immigrants have to put up with present-day realities in squalid, frontier town conditions, and many Russians readily admit they have already had quite enough deprivation under communism.

"I speak to hundreds of Soviet tourists every year, and I tell them the truth," Mr Rager said, as we toured one of the new housing complexes rising from the desert scrubland, complete with an up-

to-the-minute shopping centre and four-screen cinema.

Workers and engineers, some of them recent arrivals from Leningrad and Kiev, reached out to shake his hand as he passed. "I tell them about the righteous man who goes to Heaven but cannot resist visiting Hell. In Hell he enjoys wine, women and song, and so asks for a transfer. When he gets there he is tormented by demons and complains he was cheated. Ah, says the Devil, then you were a tourist... now you are an immigrant."

For Israel, a great deal hangs on whether the new immigrants make a go of it in towns like Beersheba, or become disillusioned and leave as soon as the United States rescinds the immigration restrictions which have forced many Soviet Jews to divert to Israel.

Commentators speak joyfully of a "miracle" equivalent to the Israeli exodus from Egypt. But the corollary is that, if Israel fails

to meet the challenge, the blow to its self-image will be immense.

Planners are fully aware that, whereas the earlier development towns were settled by Moroccans, East Europeans and others only too happy to be pioneers, today's Soviet immigrants are better educated, more sophisticated, less interested in Zionism and much less willing to be told where to live.

Of Beersheba's 115,000 population, some 20 per cent are already of Soviet origin. None the less, despite Mr Rager's efforts, most of the new Soviet olim still prefer to join friends and relatives in the coastal cities rather than take up the challenge of the open spaces.

Mr Rager outlines a vision of a "boom town" in the desert, based on tourism, Bedouin folklore and the building industry. He has cajoled big investors from Toronto to Arizona into putting up cash. But the outcome is still in the balance.

I asked Boris Sverdlov, a doc-

tor, aged 31, who arrived last month, how he liked frontier town life. "Nice," he responded. "It's OK." The shops were well stocked, he said, his family flat was new and large, there was a first-class hospital and university at Beersheba, but salaries were very low and the town was still "in the middle of nowhere".

Even if some of the new immigrants do "drop out", Israeli officials remain confident that many will stay.

But the key question, especially as Mr Shimon Peres, the Labour Party leader, manoeuvres to try to form the next Israeli Government on a "peace platform", is whether the Russian immigrants will move Israel to the right or left politically.

Both Likud and Labour have set up offices with Russian speakers in an attempt to recruit Soviet Jews to their cause, knowing that the burgeoning Russian community will be a vital factor in any future election.

Two die as police fire on township protesters

Johannesburg (Reuters, AP) - South African police opened fire on black anti-apartheid protesters in two black townships near Johannesburg yesterday, killing at least two people and injuring scores of others, according to hospital sources.

Police used shotguns and tear gas to disperse several thousand black protesters in Sebokeng and Sharpeville, witnesses said. But no injuries were reported in the Sharpeville clashes.

The townships are south of Johannesburg and about six miles apart.

A hospital employee at Sebokeng said the two dead were a boy and a girl, aged about 14.

Witnesses said up to 100 people may have been wounded by the police fire there.

"You cannot tell exactly how many were wounded, there were so many," one nurse at the hospital said.

A police spokesman said he was still waiting for reports from the scene, but confirmed there had been widespread disturbances.

The South African Press Association quoted witnesses saying at least four people had been killed by police.

Other reporters saw about 30 people, including young children, leave the Sebokeng hospital after being treated for gunshot wounds.

Many had been shot in the back, the journalists said.

The injured said they had been taking part in a march from the black township to the white city of Vereeniging to protest against high rents, housing conditions and racial segregation in local government facilities.

The police tried first to use tear gas to stop the march, which had not been given official permission under the three-year-old state of emergency. They then opened fire.

The crowd pelted police with bricks and stones, according to witnesses.

After the clash, some people in the crowd reportedly tried to continue the march and stoned buses.

Municipal offices in the centre of the township were set on fire and cars overturned.

Camera crew members of the Visnews international television agency said they saw men in civilian clothes driving through the township streets in unmarked cars firing at random with pistols.

The failed march in Sebokeng was planned as part of a march on the offices of the ruling white National Party in Vereeniging - the home constituency of President de Klerk - from nine satellite black townships.

The demonstration was forbidden by a magistrate and the town council last week.

A local police spokesman said that earlier in the day the Sebokeng police station had been stoned.

Large crowds also gathered in the other townships in the area, a major industrial centre where work was disrupted in many factories by the protest. The demonstration was organized by groups allied to the African National Congress.

Leaders of the ANC are due to meet Mr de Klerk on April 11 for preliminary talks on ways to negotiate power-sharing between blacks and whites.

Also, 15 blacks were killed in weekend factional fighting, according to police and press reports.

Police said suspected ANC guerrillas fired two rocket propelled grenades on Sunday night at town council offices in the black township of Soweto outside Johannesburg.

The two Soviet-made RPG-7 grenades caused some damage, but police said later that there were no injuries in the attacks.

Law of the jungle on a city's doorstep



African drama: A rare Tawny Eagle carries a struggling frog to its treetop nest in the Nairobi National Park, a few miles from the centre of the Kenyan capital. Most of the continent's big game, except elephants, can be seen roaming free in the park, against a backdrop of city skyscrapers on the horizon

Tokyo bestseller fuels unease in Washington

From Joe Joseph, Tokyo

A PUNCHY Japanese diatribe against America, which has become a bestseller in Japan and enraged those who have read pirated translations in Washington, is about to anger a wider audience through an authorized English version that will give foreigners a rare taste of a new, more assertive Japan.

Mr Shintaro Ishihara, the nationalistic novelist-turned-politician, who feels Japan should snap out of its "post-war stepchild mentality" and tell America who really is top today, said that Simon and Schuster had agreed to publish an English edition of his book, *The Japan that Can Say No*.

The English version, due out in May, seems so certain to make Japan-US relations stickier than they already are that Mr Akio Morita, the chairman of Sony, new owner of Hollywood's Columbia Pictures and the book's now embarrassed co-author, has demanded that his contribu-

tions be edited out and his name be kept off the dust-jacket.

Senior government politicians, half-way through tricky trade talks with the United States and suddenly finding themselves begging Washington for help in reviving the yen, are also chewing their nails about the likely fallout, especially since they feel Washington is looking for a bogeyman to replace Moscow.

Mr Morita's shyness will leave the \$300,000 (£187,500) in royalties for Mr Ishihara, who has been complaining that the pirated version robbed him of his royalties.

Mr Ishihara is taken seriously in Washington, partly because he made a stab at being Prime Minister last autumn, partly because he wants another stab, and largely because he is the first member of Japan's ruling Liberal Democrats to say publicly what many Japanese

privately mutter over their beer and peanuts.

His language is designed to taunt, and it succeeds in doing so effectively.

US congressmen began howling - and questioning the loyalty of their most powerful ally - when they read Mr Ishihara's provocative statement that, since America's nuclear missiles could not fire straight without Japanese semi-conductors, Japan could drastically change the balance of power by selling advanced microchips to Moscow.

Mr Ishihara also says America resents Japan because Americans are racist. In Japan much foreign criticism is called "Japan-bashing".

But Mr Morita was caught out by Washington's furious reaction to the book, saying it was for Japanese eyes only.

Opinions that would not travel well are traded openly in Japanese magazines and chat shows in the belief that Japan remains an island.

Arab League defends Iraq in Bazoft row

From Michael Theodorou, Nicosia

THE Arab League yesterday rallied around Iraq in its confrontation with Britain over the execution of the *Observer* journalist Farzad Bazoft, but said the affair should not damage relations between Arab and European countries.

General Cheddi Klibi, the League secretary, said Iraq had been fully justified in executing Bazoft and had merely exercised its right to apply the law of the land as any other state would do.

"Those who took part in the political and media campaign against Iraq... forgot that Iraq is still a state, and justly, that it is in a state of war with Iran and that it has the right to defend its security and national interests," General Klibi said in Tunis, where the League met.

Iraq called for the meeting last week to gather Arab support against British and European criticism of its decision to execute Mr Bazoft in defiance of international appeals to spare his life.

Last Thursday the Arab League issued a statement condemning British news coverage of Iraq over the affair. Some Arab diplomats hoped this would satisfy Iraq and privately opposed the special League meeting, preferring that the affair be quietly forgotten.

General Klibi said: "The Arab states are keen to affirm their solidarity with Iraq, either against the tendentious campaign or in response to any possible aggression against its territory or installations."

General Klibi was at pains to show that the League had no desire to allow the affair to become an irritant in relations between the Arab world and

Europe. "The Arab states are keen to preserve Arab-European relations from any deterioration which Israel may be planning for them," he said.

In his carefully worded opening speech, General Klibi made no mention of Iraq's accusation that Mr Bazoft had been spying for Britain, but repeated allegations that the Iranian-born journalist had ties with Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service. The affair, he implied, was a trap set by Israel and Iran to damage Iraq's relations with European countries.

"For that reason we have taken the initiative of informing the presidency of the European Community that the Arab states are worried about attempts to drag the Community into an affair which may have undesirable consequences," he said.

On Friday, France, which was Iraq's biggest arms supplier after the Soviet Union during the Gulf War, called off the visit to Baghdad by an army chief of staff, apparently in protest at the Bazoft execution.

BEIRUT: Lebanon's rival Christians yesterday strengthened fortifications and brought up fresh fighters and ammunition (Reuters reports).

Security sources said General Michel Aoun and the Lebanese Forces led by Mr Samir Geagea were apparently preparing for battle in the lull following a day of tank and artillery clashes in Beirut and the north-east Keserwan mountains.

Sunday's fighting, in which six people were killed and 12 wounded, was the worst violation of a fragile truce that halted four weeks of tank, artillery and rocket battles on March 2.

Setback for Spanish Socialists

From Harry Debelins
Madrid

FOR the first time in its eight years in power, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party found itself without an absolute majority in Parliament yesterday.

A court-ordered re-run of last month's general elections in the Spanish enclave of Melilla on the North African coast gave the colony's only seat in the Congress of Deputies to the opposition, the conservative Popular Party, eroding the Socialists' one-seat majority.

The loss of the Melilla seat, which had gone to the Socialists in the annulled ballot on October 29, left the party with 173 seats, exactly half the total in the country's powerful lower house.

However the setback is only symbolic. The Socialists retain a real voting majority because four of the seats in the Congress won by Herri Batasuna (People's Unity) - the group supporting the Basque separatist organization, Eta - have not been occupied.

Whether the four radical Basque deputies will be able to take their places depends on a decision to be made by the Constitutional Court about whether they may add the phrase "by legal imperative" to their obligatory oath or promise to uphold the constitution.

Even if the tribunal rules in their favour, they may continue their long-standing boycott of the Spanish parliament.

Cuban weeps after club inferno

From James Bone, New York

THE CUBAN immigrant accused of being the worst mass murderer in US history showed remorse after his arrest for starting a fire which killed 87 people in a Bronx nightclub, and broke down and cried while being questioned by police.

Mr Julio Gonzalez, aged 36, apologized for setting fire to the Happy Land Social Club in the East Tremont area early on Sunday, and gave extensive videotaped statements to detectives. "The devil made me do it," he said.

If convicted of murder and arson charges, Mr Gonzalez will replace Andrew Kehoe as

the worst mass murderer in America. Kehoe bombed a Michigan school in 1927, killing 45 people, 38 of them children.

The bearded, pony-tailed Mr Gonzalez was one of the thousands of Cubans who arrived in the United States in the Mariel boatlift from Cuba in 1980. He worked as a warehouse labourer until he lost his job six months ago.

Police said he had been ejected from the club before the fire after annoying an ex-girlfriend who worked as a cloakroom attendant there. Threatening, "I'll be back", he picked up a plastic jug at the

club and filled it with one dollar's worth of petrol at a nearby garage.

He allegedly went back to the crammed club, threw the petrol on the floor and set light to it, the police said. His former girlfriend was one of five people who survived the fire.

After discovering that the Happy Land Social Club had been served with an eviction notice in December, Mr David Dinkins, the Mayor of New York, ordered a crackdown on illegal dance clubs. Police sent 200 inspectors to check that clubs ordered to close had actually shut down.

Seeds of conflict are water-borne in parched Middle East

From Christopher Walker, Cairo

WATER, or rather the shortage of it, is joining the Palestinian problem as a source of tension and potential conflict in the Middle East.

As a succession of water-related crises have shown, the gravity of the problem arises largely because the region's great rivers - the Euphrates, Tigris and Nile - rise in non-Arab countries, while those rivers on which Israel relies, the Jordan and Yarmouk, have their sources in Arab countries.

A recent report from the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies said: "Before the 21st century, the struggle over limited and threatened water resources could shatter already fragile ties among regional states and lead to unprecedented upheaval."

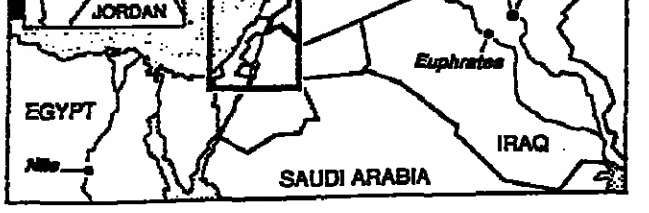
A symposium was held in Cairo last weekend on the shortage of Nile water and the desperate measures which will have to be taken during the 1990s to avoid disaster. As long ago as April 1987, a US Embassy report said: "There will be insufficient water to sustain Egypt's population by the year 2000 unless drastic conservation and management improvements are put into place in the next few years."

Western experts say that little has been done since. Two-thirds of the precious water allocated to towns and cities is lost through inefficient use, such as leaking pipes, while Nile farmers use twice as much water as they need because of poor irrigation methods.

Dr Mohammed Abu Mandour, director of the symposium, said: "One of the main reasons for the seriousness of the Nile water shortage is the terrifying increase in popula-

tion, anticipated to reach 70 million by the year 2000 (compared with 54 million now), coupled with the limited quota of Nile water allotted to Egypt."

The source of the Blue Nile is in Ethiopia, and widespread



concern was caused recently in Cairo by reports that the Israelis and Ethiopians were co-operating on schemes for harnessing its headwaters.

Mr Habib Ayub, an Egyptian geographer, has estimated that if Ethiopia does eventually tap the river Egypt could lose 20 per cent of its water supply. Military experts here have no doubt that Egypt would go to war to protect its supply.

Professor Elias Salameh, of Jordan University, said: "The demand for water is expected to increase significantly in the coming decade. In this over-heated atmosphere of political hostilities... the latent tensions may develop into domestic conflicts and expand to regional ones."

He added: "Water will

determine the future of the Middle East. The population of the region will double by 2010. We will need twice as much water as we have now."

Earlier this month talks between Syria, Iraq and Turkey broke down after five days when experts at a meeting in Ankara failed to agree on a Turkish plan for sharing water from the Euphrates and the Tigris.

Turkish government sources claimed that Syrian and Iraqi representatives insisted on a system under which the supplies would be shared on the basis of each country stating its water needs. "But the added figures exceeded the total potential of the basin," one official said.

Earlier this year, tension rose when Turkey diverted the

Euphrates for a month, angering its two neighbours whose agriculture and irrigation depend largely on the river. The Turkish action was part of a \$21 billion (£13.1 billion) scheme to build 21 dams, 17 hydro-electric plants, and to irrigate 46,000 square miles of semi-arid land.

The west Beirut daily *As Saffir* said that the dispute carried the seeds of war because it affected the "vital interests" of all three states. The Euphrates springs from Turkish territory and passes through Syria and Iraq. It is 1,438 miles long, 249 miles of which are in Turkish territory, and 292 miles in Syria.

"Water is more important than oil in this region," said Mr Mustafa el Said, a former Egyptian Economy Minister.

TIMES DIARY

ALAN HAMILTON

William Whitelaw retires this week from the presidency of the National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations, and so relinquishes his last formal Tory office, although he remains the party's deputy leader. With the leader himself so besieged, it is an appropriate moment to recall Whitelaw's own prediction of how the mighty will fall. Interviewed two years ago, when the Thatcher bandwagon still had most of its wheels on, Whitelaw opined that where she stood in history would "depend entirely on how it all finishes", he did, however, venture that she would tower over Churchill to become a peacetime Churchill.



Whitelaw: mess mate

"But", said Willie, "there's no doubt her leadership is bound to end in a muddle, because she's been so dominant for so long. The Tory party is good at getting itself into a mess, and it will get itself into another one sooner or later - it knows how to do that." She will never, I suspect, achieve the status of her predecessor Lord John Russell; it was he who, in 1831, repeated the most despised tax of the day - the ood oo windows.

Visitors to Tokyo with an hour to spare have discovered an unexpected cultural bonus. The resting place of Van Gogh's "Sunflowers", sold for a then world record £24.7 million at Sotheby's in 1987, is now open to the public on the 42nd floor of the painting's owners, the Yasuda Fire and Marine Insurance Company. For 500 yen (around £2) a head, the public can admire the work in the majestic surroundings of the company museum, along with such other artistic plums as Cézanne's "Pommes et Serviettes" and Gauguin's "L'Allée des Alyscamps, Arles". Incidentally, the word is that Japanese corporate collectors are beginning to fight shy of paintings because of the possibility of fakes. The companies' new target is sculpture, particularly Rodin.

● Ah, how distant now seem the Sixties. A mailshot to alumni of the London School of Economics, that one-time cauldron of revolutionary thought, invites them to join the Executive World Book Club for cut-price volumes by John Harvey-Jones, Mark McCormack, Lee Iacocca and other high priests of capitalism. Oh, and they get a free Filofax if they join right away.

Coincidence, of course, that the new United States ambassador to Zimbabwe arrived just as the country was celebrating the tenth anniversary of its independence, an event I shall forever associate with Angela Rippon's absurdly over-enthusiastic reading of the news about the Rev Ndabengwe Sithole and his guerrillas. It is less of a coincidence that, as part of the celebrations, many street names in Harare (née Salisbury) have been changed from those of white colonial heroes to



Rhodes to oblivion

leading lights of the freedom war. Citizens of all colours are vastly amused that James Rhodes, a black man, was due to take up residence at the US embassy in Rhodes Avenue, named after the only begotten white Rhodesia. Fortunately for all sorts of sensibilities, Rhodes Avenue has just become Josiah Tongogara Avenue, after the general commanding Robert Mugabe's Zanu forces, who died in a car crash shortly before the war was won.

Duties in Bonn have been given the additional duty of reporting motorists who park their cars in the way of dustcarts, a task which will doubtless do their Christmas boxes no good at all. The edict coincides with the German capital's publication of its annual league table of diplomatic parking tickets. Two countries with only three official cars each came top and bottom: Cape Verde collected no tickets at all, while Angola collected 62. The Poles, despite having 80 vehicles, stayed commendably within the law and emerged second best, Britain and the United States tied for third place with 0.17 offences per car. But I fear that the Vatican, which last year boasted an entirely clean record, fell to fourth place when its sole diplomatic car picked up one parking ticket. Naughty Nuncio Nabbed, as the papers with small pages might say.

Again there is a significant Thatcher factor in the Tories' slump in the polls. To a number of Tories, therefore, the intriguing element in Labour's weekend lead of up to 28% was the suggestion that, with Michael Heseltine as leader, the gap would close to 10%.

Mr Heseltine is all the more. But in a situation rich with ironies, there is nothing more likely to ensure there is no change of leader. Although a fighter not likely to lay down the leadership at the first whistle of grapshest past the ears, Mrs Thatcher would contemplate retirement if she became convinced that she was the one true impediment to re-election of a Tory government. If the question of the succession were an open contest she might just bring herself to consider going. But with Mr Heseltine appearing unstoppable, there is nothing, senior colleagues say, further from her mind. She would not willingly hand over to someone who, in her view, would revive all that she has fought against - corporatism, interventionism, over-credulous Europeanism.

Forget the calls for Mr Heseltine to become party chairman. She will not have him, and he would not want to give up the freedom to take his Thatcherism à la carte. Do not expect him

Robin Oakley on a new study showing Thatcherites in a minority

How the Tories divide

either to sign a new oath of loyalty to Mrs Thatcher and all her works. For a man who walked out of her Cabinet in disagreement with her methods, it would make a living lie of his past three years of endeavour. Hence yesterday's careful response to Sir Geoffrey Howe.

What Mr Heseltine prays for is that others will put Mrs Thatcher under irresistible pressure to go. He does so for two reasons. First is the traditional fear that he who wields the dagger rarely inherits the crown. The second is that were he to challenge and succeed, he could inherit a party so bitterly divided that it would be unleadable this side of a general election.

It is a ootoo sedulously spread by party managers anxious to keep down the hysteria and avert a leadership contest this autumn. But how Thatcherite is the party today?

New and intriguing light is cast by Philip Norton, Professor of Government at the University of Hull, in the latest *Parliamentary Affairs*. After assiduous study of division lists and public statements, he offers a detailed breakdown of Tory MPs which could influence the sums on a leadership challenge.

There are three sub-groupings, he says, that can be identified under a Thatcherite group label. Thirty are core Thatcherites, free-market and pro-hanging:

Michael Brown, Christopher Chope, Robert Dunn, Timothy Eggar, Michael Fallon, Anthony Fowell, Michael Forsyth, Eric Forth, Teresa Gorman, Archie Hamilton, Neil Hamilton, Sir Peter Hordern, Gerald Howarth, Timothy Jannan, Robert Jones, Ivan Lawrence, Edward Leigh, Francis Maude, John Moore, Michael Portillo, John Redwood, Nicholas Ridley, Peter Rost, Angela Rumbold, Richard Shepherd, Allan Stewart, Norman Tebbit, Margaret Thatcher, John Townend and Ian Twinn.

Professor Norton lists 26 right-wingers who emphasize law and order issues:

David Atkinson, Vivian Bendall, Sir Rhodes Boyson, John

Carlisle, Alan Clark, Edwina Currie, Terence Dickson, Sir John Farr, George Gardiner, Peter Griffiths, Michael Gyles, Ralph Howell, Andrew Mackay, David Mauden, Gerry Neale, James Pawsy, Barry Porter, Sir William Shelton, Sir Trevor Skeet, Ivor Stanbrook, Sir John Stokes, Teddy Taylor, William Walker, John Ward, Kenneth Warren and Ray Whitney.

And there are 16 of free-market views but anti-hanging:

Nicholas Bennett, John Biffen, Sir Richard Body, Nicholas Budge, Sir William Clark, David Heathcoat-Amory, Alan Howarth, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Norman Lamont, Nigel Lawson, Peter Lilley, Peter Lloyd, Paul Marland, Roger Moate, Tim Renton and Ian Gow.

In categorizing the rest of the party, Professor Norton identifies 17 "populists":

Anthony Beaumont-Dark, David Gilroy Bevan, Sir Nicholas Bonser, Winston Churchill, Derek Conway, Den Dover, Sir Marcus Fox, Richard Holt, Dame Elaine Kellett-Bowman, Dame Jill Knight, Anthony Marlow, Robin Maxwell-Hyslop, David Mudd, Sir Julio Ridsdale, Tony Speller, Ann Winterton and Nicholas Winterton.

Among the critics of Thatcherism, he lists 27 "wets":

Alick Buchanan-Smith, Patrick Cormack, Julian Critchley, Stephen Dorrell, Hugh Dykes, Sir Ian Gilmour, Sir Philip Goodhart, Alan Haselhurst, Jeremy Hayes, Edward Heath, Robert Hicks, David Keir, James Lester, David Madel, Sir Anthony Meyer, Sir Charles Morrison, Christopher Paton, Mrs Elizabeth Peacock, Timothy Raison, Robert Rhodes-James, Andrew Rowe, Nicholas Scott, Robin Squire, Sir Peter Tapsell, Cyril Townsend, Peter Walker and Sir George Young.

And finally Professor Norton identifies 40 "damps":

Richard Alexander, Jack Aspinwall, Robert Atkins, Kenneth Baker, Tony Baldry, William Benyon, Virginia Bottomley, Peter Bottomley, John Bown, Alistair Burt, Lynda Chalker, Sydney Chapman, Kenneth Clarke, Nigel Forman, Roger Freeman, Tristan Garel-Jones, Patrick Ground, Keith Hamp-

son, Christopher Hawkins, Sir Barney Hayhoe, Michael Head, Terence Higgins, Douglas Hogg, David Hunt, Douglas Hurd, John Lee, Sir Nicholas Lyell, Michael Mates, Robert McCrindle, Norman Macmillan, Colin Moynihan, Richard Needham, Stephen Norris, John Patten, Sir David Price, Timothy Rathbone, Peter Thurnham, William Waldegrave, Dennis Walters and Timothy Yeo.

Although some might quarrel with their categorization, we are left with 72 firm Thatcherites (19 per cent of the parliamentary party) and 67 "wets" and "damps" (18 per cent). Of the remaining 217, says Professor Norton, nearly 200 are party loyalists, on whom the whips can normally rely, and 20-30 are personally loyal to Mrs Thatcher.

Professor Norton's argument is that the Thatcherites are in a minority and do not dominate the party infrastructure. Because Tory leaders have absolute control over policy as well as patronage, "whatever the direction the new leader wishes the Conservative Party to take, there is little to prevent him or her achieving that goal... Mrs Thatcher has not crafted a party that is inherently Thatcherite in terms of attitude and composition. Loyalty will flow to the new leader as leader, regardless of which particular section of the party he or she is drawn from."

Don't put your faith in people power

The tense situation in Lithuania is a salutary reminder of the realities of power. General V. Landsverk, C-in-C of Soviet land forces, has said he hopes to be able to avoid the use of force, but he clearly has the means to use it effectively unless the Lithuanian nationalists bow to Moscow's minimum demands. If it were used, the West would protest volubly while taking no significant action to help the Lithuanians. For all practical purposes, they would be on their own.

Because of the past year's almost miraculous events in Eastern Europe, not to mention South Africa and Nicaragua, a myth has been growing that the power of unarmed people in the mass is irresistible. The result has been a dangerous complacency, and encouragement for those who have always taken a dim view of defence.

We should all like to think that dictatorial governments have been toppled, or made to transform themselves, by the sheer force of popular sentiment. How nice if that were true. But is it? Beyond question, people living under oppressive regimes have shown that they cannot be brainwashed, and that their desire for freedom is unquenchable. But that was well-known already. It was obvious in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Yet on both those occasions, freedom, if not the desire for it, was all too effectively quenched.

In Poland, communism and the Soviet occupation were always manifestly hated, and the rise of Solidarity provided the most dramatic proof of that strength of feeling. Yet it was not enough to overthrow the regime or to get rid of the Russians. Indeed, at one point the Pope had to intercede with Lech Walesa, at General Jaruzelski's request, to persuade him to restrain his movement and so avoid the calamity of a Soviet crackdown.

If communism has now been displaced throughout Eastern Europe, and if the Russians are moving out, it is not because the power of the people was irresistible, but because Mr Gorbachev took a deliberate decision, for his own reasons, to allow it. The Red Army, instead of being ordered to crush the popular movements, as it had done before, was told to stand aside and let them prevail. In other words, it was Soviet power, negatively exercised, that determined the course of events.

The local armies of Warsaw Pact countries in Eastern Europe are nationalist rather than communist, and so sympathized with the civilian demonstrators. In Romania, where there was a formidable corps of armed security police loyal to the dictator, the revolution succeeded only because the regular army sided with the people.

In Panama, where the army stayed loyal to the dictator, the will of the people as expressed in a general election was powerless to remove him. It took an



Despite democracy's resurgence

in Eastern Europe and elsewhere,

John Grigg cautions against

writing off the men with the guns

American invasion to give effect to the popular will, and even then it was difficult. In Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega has so far made no attempt to use the army to frustrate the election result, either because he fears that the Americans might act against him, as they did against Noriega, or - perhaps more likely - because he sees the democratic game as worth playing out, in his own long-term interest.

In South Africa, the collapse of apartheid is due to a variety of causes, above all external economic pressure, but hardly at all to the struggle, armed or unarmed, of the black majority inside the country. If the government had been in a mood for oew Sharpeville, the streets would have been cleared and the townships cowed. Archbishop Tutu would have been silenced and Nelson Mandela would have stayed in prison.

For those who oow tend to discount armed force and to put their trust in the moral force of unarmed masses, the most terrible warning is of course what happened in China. Just when it seemed that power was growing out of the barrel of a gun, but out of the mouths and hearts of students, the army appeared in support of the government, and within minutes the dream of a peaceful, popular revolution was shattered.

The same thing could happen if the Red Army were willing to be used to save the Soviet Union and its pre-1945 empire from

disintegration and anarchy. So far, that army has been restrained, both at home and abroad, and it seems to have accepted its negative role. Only in Tbilisi and Baku has it been used to assert Moscow's authority, and in each case it was swiftly effective.

But the time may come when Gorbachev or some other civilian leader decides to use his army on a much larger scale, or the army might take the law into its own hands under the leadership of a soldier of political talent and ambition: a Russian Kemal Ataturk.

Soviet military failure in Afghanistan should not mislead us. Even a formidable and well-equipped modern army is likely to fail when operating in alien territory and daunting terrain (mountainous or thickly forested, or both) against a motivated enemy with strong material support from a rival power. Like the Russians in Afghanistan, the Americans faced such a challenge in Vietnam. But these exceptions only prove the rule, that a modern army can normally impose its will, or at the very least hold its own.

Except in such special conditions, guerrillas cannot win against a modern army with all its weaponry and gadgetry, including the technology of surveillance. That is one reason why ANC guerrillas have made so little impact in South Africa,

where the armed struggle is important only psychologically as a bargaining counter. There are five million whites in South Africa, rather than a mere few hundred thousand as in Zimbabwe. There is a point beyond which they cannot be coerced.

In Ulster, the Protestants are a still larger minority as a proportion of the total population of Ireland, and they are similarly intransigent. Even if the IRA could sap Britain's will to resist its terrorism, it could never hope to win against the Ulster Protestants.

The point is that we should not forget that physical strength is ultimately decisive in human affairs, whatever the balance of moral worth.

Because of her opposition to economic sanctions and armed struggle in South Africa, Mrs Thatcher lapsed into language more suited to the women of Greenham Common when talking to *The Sunday Times* last month: "Look at Gandhi," she said. "It is the non-violent that commands total respect from the whole world and has achieved far more than violent movements." The implication was that Gandhi had won independence for his country by his non-violent methods, whereas they almost certainly delayed it by a quarter of a century. When the British eventually left India after the Second World War, it was not because Indian soul-force drove them out, but because they no longer had the resources to maintain their rule and because the world's two emerging superpowers were opposed to British imperialism. The Raj had become physically untenable.

Gandhi's methods could never have defeated Hitler, and it is not by Gandhi's methods that communist tyranny has been brought down in large parts of the world.

Peter Jonas No substitute for subsidy

John Major has reintroduced the word "generosity" into the arts funding debate. "We are by instinct a generous nation to causes that appeal to us," he said last week. For too long arts organizations have been reluctant to include this word in their fund-raising, concentrating instead on marketing jargon and catch-phrases.

Under the Gift Aid scheme announced in the Budget, ood-off donations, individual or corporate, of between £600 and £5 million will qualify for tax relief at basic rate (payable to the charity) and for relief at any due higher rate (payable to the donor). This announcement is the third signal of a change of attitude to arts funding since Peter Palumbo became chairman of the Arts Council in April last year.

First came the announcement of an improved grant; then Richard Luce, the Arts Minister, gave the Council a more strategic role and devolved many of its funding responsibilities to regional arts associations. Mr Palumbo's credibility must be high in Whitehall if he and Mr Luce have managed to convince the Treasury that new tax incentives are essential to help reverse the effects of the severe underfunding of the arts during the Rees-Mogg years at the Arts Council.

Since the mid-1980s, arts companies have been outstandingly successful at increasing their self-generated income and reducing dependence on public-sector finance. It has, however, proved to be unrealistic to expect box-office prices and income, as well as private-sector sponsorship and donations, to rise at rates of growth far in excess of inflation while grants have been kept down to increases of around 2 per cent a year. Inevitably, ceilings have been reached in the last year, higher seat prices have threatened accessibility and deficits have begun to appear.

Mr Luce's acknowledgement of the problem and his success in securing more funds from the Treasury last October has since been further undermined. As we gleaned from the Budget, estimates of inflation are sharply up: the 1990 fourth-quarter figure is now likely to be 7.25 per cent compared to 5.5 per cent when the 1990-91 grants were announced. Not only will higher inflation affect costs to the arts; higher interest rates are likely to depress consumer expenditure on theatre-going and other arts events.

Will Gift Aid come to the rescue? Will the arts, more than lifeboats, famine relief and Aids, ever appeal to that "instinctive generosity" that Mr Major describes? While giving his measures a genuine welcome, I have to warn that if they are to succeed, they must not be perceived as a means of replacing central government funding for the arts.

If, on the other hand, central funding is restored to vitality, increased individual giving may help us all to catch up with the

deficiencies of the past and match our much better subsidized European colleagues in 1992. Individual support must not be seen as a hope for survival but as a spur for growth.

I hope Mr Luce is not seduced by mouthwatering American statistics which show that arts in the US received \$6.82 billion from the private sector in 1988, of which 83 per cent came from individuals. What the figures do not show is that growth to this level has been steady and slow since the introduction of US federal income tax in the 1920s.

Tax incentives for the donor have long been in place, but the main reason for giving is that doing so is part of every American's local and national culture. Americans are used to being cultivated and solicited for donations; they expect it and enjoy the "glow factor". A Charities Aid Foundation survey shows that the average Briton gives to all charities a total of no more than £2 a month.

We shall do our best to change that, but we are aware that theatres and museums are not the highest priority for the giving classes, and we shall have to develop our methods and asking techniques to raise ourselves higher on the totem pole of priorities. This will take time, investment, training and resources. Above all, it will need the Government and the Arts Council to take a long view and to display good faith in the capacity for long-term gains by adequate investment now.

Terry Hands, the outgoing artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, recently redefined the word "subsidy" to support his case for help with the RSC's current deficit problems. To the audience it represents a reduction in the price of seats or admission; to the Government it is investment - the arts bring in more than they cost; to the arts companies it is a loan and is paid back in VAT, national insurance contributions, income tax and the value of the arts to the community.

Subsidy as the core of our work must be preserved. We must welcome Mr Major's new Gift Aid and the simplification of covenants that he now allows, but to give his measures the best chance of success, we must make sure the fruits they bring are new money and not merely replacement money.

Religion, politics, health, education, arts... Our most difficult task is to create a climate in which art is acknowledged to belong to the list of life's essentials. "Life's metaphysical activity" must be allowed, with adventure and experiment, to engage our senses and intelligence in order to ensure a civilized and just society, of which the generosity Mr Major talks about is the flower. Let us nurture and care for it - not nip it in the bud.

The author is General Director of English National Opera.

Taking spin on the autoroute

THE farrago so far. An Englishman who failed to have his head examined has arrived in France with a vanload of his old furniture. He has been stopped at the Calais péage by two policemen who wish to see the import licence he has not got. Because he has not got it, they wish to see the old furniture. Last Friday, we left them opening the doors. Ten seconds have passed; you may now read on. (All conversation has been roughly translated from the even rougher original.)

"Lo, the old furniture!" I said. They craned towards the loosely piled chairs, tables, sofas, rugs, pictures and boxes of odds and sods. Given the plausibility of all such derelict stuff, I could not see how their hearts could fail to melt. Homelessness is ever poignant, even in a kettle.

"This is not for sale!"

"How could it be?" I cried. "It is all old. And I am not a merchant of furniture. Lo, my passport."

They ignored it. Instead they climbed inside and began poking about. One sat on a sofa. I prayed it would bong. It had always bonged before. If it bonged now, we should all laugh about broken-down old springs and clap one another upon the shoulder and I should be on my way.

But it did not bong now. It liked Cricklewood. It would miss its friend, the gateleg table. It wanted revenge.

"Is leather?" said the flic.

"Of a kind," I said. "But see

how creased and worn it is."

"It is antique?"

"No," I cried. "Just old. Broken. Worthless."

Venom came off the sofa. You could taste it.

They convened at a desk; one ran his hand over it, unnecessarily lovingly. This is *The Antique Autoroute Show*, I thought; he is going to ask me if I have any idea of what a remarkable piece like this would fetch at Sotheby's.

"I'm afraid the leg wobbles," I said, with one of those light laughs you only ever seem to hear in customs halls.

He leaned heavily on the sofa; the leg did not wobble.



ALAN COREN

"Cricklewood," creaked the dressing-table softly to the sofa. His colleague eased the wrapping from a picture. It was a Bill Tidy.

"It is an original?"

"It is a cartoon," I said. Did you know that there are two words for cartoon in French? Cartoon means a Leonardo, Dessin means a Bill Tidy. It's amazing the things you can find out from a *gendarme*, especially after a long hysterical explanation to the effect that Bill Tidy is alive and well in Solihull, thinks that the Quattrocento is a small Fiat, and knocks out a dozen of these a day.

But it was all right. They sucked their teeth, they sniffed, but they finally conceded that none of this stuff was going to destabilize the French fine art market. They were about to hop

down again when one casually lifted a dust-sheet, and paused.

"It is new, this table of ping-pong," he said.

"No," I said, "it is ten years old."

"It has the air of the new," said the copper. "Let us descend it." They descended it to the road, and set it up. We might have been in one of those short, grainy Czech films: *Two Policemen and a Ping-Pong Table*. Passing drivers gazed. "What is this that is?" you felt them mutter. A charity match? Avis Vans v. La Stréte, saving the whale?

"It is simply that we have never used it," I explained, but they

shook their heads and opened one of those fat, ring-bound books common to all customs men wherein everything is writ concerning dues, attachments and proscriptions ancient chiming barometers, vivarium decor, funnel-paint and batbands (feathered). This they thumbed for some time.

But, miraculously, tables (ping-pong) had no entry. You could anchor a tanker off Brest and unload 10 million tables (ping-pong) with equanimity. So they ascended it again. They nodded brusquely. I climbed back into the cab.

"Good game?" said Mrs Coren. I watched them dwindle in my mirror. Each was scribbling furiously.

"I have the feeling," I said, "that the last duty-free ping-pong table has just entered France."



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THE BALTIC AND THE WEST

The West has watched with admiration and alarm the *sang froid* of the people and Government of Lithuania in the face of President Gorbachev's unsubtle attempts to intimidate them. Yet the European Community and the United States have formulated no strategy for deterring what appears to be a crudely signalled Soviet *putsch* in Vilnius. The Kremlin might be forgiven for interpreting hesitation as the result of the same self-interest which led democracies to appease undemocratic opponents half a century ago.

It is nevertheless difficult to suggest concrete measures which a medium-sized power like Britain might take, without prejudicing its wider interests, to deter Soviet military intervention on the Baltic seaboard. Military action, even of a demonstrative kind, must be ruled out as hopelessly counter-productive.

Indeed, the official news agency, Tass, is already claiming that Nato warships have arrived in the Baltic. The Soviet propaganda offensive which would certainly accompany the overthrow of President Landsbergis would obviously make the most of Western subversion, in order to render more plausible Lithuania's alleged threat to Soviet security.

Economic sanctions would be equally counter-productive. The objections are familiar: inefficiency of enforcement, the improbability of a united front, the imperviousness of national politics to external economic aggression. West Germany, which has so much at stake in détente with the Soviet Union, would be unlikely to agree even to consider sanctions, despite ties with the Baltic states going back to the Teutonic Knights.

The Government cannot credibly threaten Moscow with anything more daunting than the traditional contempt of the British for the bully. Yet the Soviet President's credibility with the West is now on the line in Lithuania. Words, carefully chosen, may weigh no less on the scales of international politics than guns or butter, as Mr Gorbachev knows better than most. His first friend and foremost defender in the West, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, is the person best qualified to administer the warning that if the Soviet Union tramples on the Lithuanians' right to self-determination for the second time this century, he will cease to be "a man one can

do business with". There is no shortage of advice urging the Prime Minister to go easy on Moscow in this dispute. Apart from pro-Soviet voices on the left, who until recently used similarly spurious arguments to justify Soviet hegemony over central Europe, the most impressive argument for leaving Mr Gorbachev to his own devices in the Baltic states has come from Lord Home. He argues that it is in our interest to deal with a single, strong Soviet leadership. A weakened, let alone a toppled, Gorbachev would be a greater threat to Britain in the long term than a crushed Lithuania.

Yet even the most robust view of British interests must be inseparable from the values for which this country made such sacrifices half a century ago. The Baltic states were among the victims of the Nazi-Soviet alliance, which made Hitler's conquest of the European mainland possible: a conquest that obliged Britain first to fight alone, then to accept Stalin as an ally even while aware of his hideous crimes.

The Lithuanians have at last begun to heal their wounds. This they can only do if the Soviet authorities admit the illegality of its annexation and all that flowed from it.

Under the 1939 Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, Lithuania — unlike Latvia and Estonia — was assigned to the German sphere of influence. Only after the German invasion of Poland was Lithuania reassigned to the Soviet sphere in exchange for a partition of Poland more favourable to Germany. Is it conceivable that Britain, which has never recognized Soviet sovereignty over the Baltic states, would fail to exorcise this bullying of Lithuania from the Germans? If not, present Soviet conduct should be treated as equally unacceptable.

British mandarins tried long and hard to make excuses for Stalin. Behind Mikhail Gorbachev, the ghost of Uncle Joe can still be seen stalking the Kremlin — and haunting some corridors in Whitehall. The Prime Minister, who last week used President Havel's visit to exorcise the spirit of Munich, can dispose of this demon too. She should leave Mr Gorbachev in no doubt that his claim to moral superiority over his predecessors depends on his treatment of Lithuania.

COLD COMFORT IN THE COMMUNITY

The National Health Service and Community Care Bill inspired a revolt in the House of Commons earlier this month and now starts what is likely to be a rough passage through the House of Lords. For once, its troubles concern not the health service but the second half of its title, community care.

The principle of the measure is sound, that responsibility for the elderly, disabled and infirm, should pass "into the community", from local health authorities to local councils. The change was meant to represent a more humane and flexible approach, and for once it showed Government confidence in elected local authorities. But the whole issue is now engulfed in the storm surrounding the poll tax.

So far, the grants councils will receive from central Government will include an amount calculated (but not designated) to cover the extra cost implied by the care legislation. But it has not been "ring fenced", that is to say, earmarked for this exclusive purpose.

The extra cost of community care will, in consequence, have no special claim, but will have to take its place in the queue alongside other calls on expenditure. Since in most areas, councils are desperately seeking to hold down poll taxes, all budgets are being squeezed. The Association of Directors of Social Services has expressed acute alarm at the consequences.

Unless the Government can find some new means of protecting the implementation of its measure, some of the most vulnerable members of the community will be the first victims of the poll tax, as care for them passes across the financial divide between central and local government. There is a special poignancy about their predicament. The ideal of placing more emphasis on community rather than custodial care was correct, reducing the role of old-fashioned, state-administered institutions in favour of families and communities.

Yet the result may push a rising number of

the mentally or physically handicapped, ill-equipped to survive outside institutions without support, into a custodial wilderness. The intended transfer of funds from the big health service institutions to smaller ones run by local councils and to home-based welfare services risks becoming a fiasco. A report by the Audit Commission last autumn criticized the two groups of administrators for their failure to work together.

Now the poll tax issue is focussing attention on resources, in an area where value-for-money is notoriously hard to define. Clearly a policy of care in the community will be a cruel joke if not properly administered and funded: with cardboard cities substituting for Victorian asylums.

The Government drafted the community care clauses of its present Bill with the best of intentions. Unfortunately, these intentions have coincided with the first year of the poll tax. What should be an overall improvement in care may actually be a drastic worsening.

Certainly, community care should not be more expensive in the long run. But the transitional period, when big institutions must remain available while alternatives are built and staffed, is likely to cost more. Unless this is reflected in the level of local council grant, the Government will be guilty of willing the end while withholding the means.

There are signs that the Government has accepted the political necessity of softening the impact of the community charge on individuals. It should also soften the impact on those for whom the community has to care, by protecting the services on which they depend. The Government does not like the device of ring fencing. If so, it must find another way of guaranteeing that money intended for society's most vulnerable people reaches its destination. This is a far better destination for the millions apparently available to buy off Tory backbenchers with poll tax rebates.

DOGS OF WAR

The danger of Mrs Thatcher being literally savaged by her critics was narrowly averted yesterday when a march by Rotweilers to Downing Street was cancelled. Four owners wisely decided discretion was the better part of canine valour and handed in a petition at Number Ten instead. They feel that they are being victimized by public opinion.

The real question is whether the nation is being tough enough. The Kennel Club points out that only three people actually died from dog bites in the first nine months of last year (none in 1988 and only one in 1987). That is minor comfort to victims of ferocious canine assaults, many of them infants. There is no conceivable reason to permit fierce animals to add to the number of vicarious dangers faced by children, just because they are classed as domestic pets.

The dearth of reliable statistics is the most formidable of the chicanes erected against human fear by defenders of canine freedom, but the pendulum is swinging in the humans' favour. Legislation was tightened last summer, to give magistrates powers not only to order dangerous dogs destroyed, but to nominate a specific executioner and fine severely owners evading the court's sentence. Such penalties, imposed after the event, still offer little solace to savaged victims.

The Dog Handling Act of 1975, requiring dogs to be permanently tethered except when with an experienced handler, applies only to guard dogs on commercial premises. Dogs such as Rotweilers are perfectly free to roam at will. Two recently wandered into a school and savaged a number of children. The growth in the number of these dogs is reported to have "peaked", but the total runs into many

thousands. They are unstable, potentially lethal and quite unsuitable as free-ranging family pets. Fashions in fearsome animals cannot change. Twenty years ago the Doberman Pinscher was top of the villainy league and the pit bull terrier — a mongrel breed for fighting — is fast overtaking the Rotweiler.

The danger from these dogs is not imagined. They are frequently used by criminals who regard them, with good reason, as anti-personnel weapons obtainable free of licence under cover of domestic pets. Since they are potentially as dangerous as explosives, guns or unsafe motor vehicles, the Government's reluctance to legislate to control them is extraordinary. It is the more so when even the Kennel Club is in favour of municipal dog wardens to police every kind of aberrant behaviour, from fouling pavements to biting legs. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has called, at very least, for a registration scheme. Polls have shown that more than nine people in 10 would be in favour of more stringent controls.

Even this would not deal with the dangerous breeds. It should be a criminal offence to allow certain named breeds out of doors without muzzles or leads. There is also a strong case for including dogs bred for their ferocity, such as Rotweilers, pit bull terriers, and crossbreeds bearing their genetic imprint, within the Dangerous Animals Act of 1976. This covers several hundred wild creatures, from gorillas to spitting cobras or giant anteaters. Those who insist on keeping fierce or dangerous animals under cloak of domesticity should no longer be indulged. They are a potential menace to the community and the law should regard them as such.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Probation officers in self-defence

From the Chief Probation Officer, Middlesex Area

Sir, In drawing attention (report, March 23) to the Commons Public Accounts Committee's report on the Home Office's control and management of the probation service, you highlight the rise in prison sentences, but fail to mention that this was arrested in 1988. The proportionate use of custody for 17 to 20-year-old males peaked in 1985 and declined dramatically in 1989, to the extent that young-offender institutions are being closed.

In the Middlesex area the magistrates' courts' use of custody for 17 to 20-year-olds fell from 13 per cent in 1985 to 6 per cent in 1988. This was the second highest rate of decrease in England and Wales. There were also substantial reductions in the magistrates' courts' use of custody for adults, while crown court centres in the area are among those making least use of custody.

This is particularly noteworthy because Middlesex has no day centres and the absence in some areas of day centres is singled out by the Public Accounts Committee as evidence of the probation service's failure to provide the courts with an effective range of non-custodial sentencing options.

The Home Office is proposing wholesale changes to the organization of the probation service, all with the common theme of establishing firmer control from the centre and ironing out diversity. As justification for this misguided centralism, it is being attributed to the service which cannot be demonstrated.

The probation service is daily offering the courts detailed, carefully-designed programmes for supervising individual offenders in the community; the courts are responding by making orders on increasingly heavily-convicted offenders; and the probation service is supervising the great majority of

these without breakdown or risk to the public.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN WALTERS,
Chief Probation Officer,
Middlesex Area Probation Service,
4th Floor, Glen House,
200 Tottenham Court Road, W1,
March 23.

From the Secretary of the Central Council of Probation Committees
Sir, You report the Commons Public Accounts Committee as stating that "social inquiry reports... have apparently been used as alternatives to fines". This is based on a misapprehension. Such reports, which are of a factual nature, are requested by the court to assist in the sentencing process. Inspectors can be blamed for many things, but the suggestion that "some probation inspectors have created friction with the courts" does them too much credit.

HM Inspectorate of Probation is quite inadequately resourced to undertake effectively all that is required of it by way of monitoring individual services and the dissemination of information and good practice guidelines. We have long urged upon the Home Office the need for a strong and vital inspectorate which, if properly resourced, would assist in the development of effective services throughout the country.

We welcome the recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee that the inspectorate be strengthened and that there should be better arrangements for the prompt dissemination of good practice, as well as its recognition of the vital balance between the central role of the Home Office and the autonomy of local probation services.

Yours faithfully,
JEAN MILES, Secretary,
Central Council of Probation Committees,
38 Belgrave Square, SW1,
March 23.

Research constraints

From Dr Tony Rees

Sir, Your obituary (March 22) does less than justice to Lord Rothschild's intention in proposing, in 1971, that Government departments should be given the money and made responsible for commissioning applied research from the research councils.

It is clear from the text of his report, "The organization and management of government R & D" and also from his subsequent evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Science and Technology that his concern was not that "too much money was spent on open-ended research and too little on solving industrial problems". Indeed, he goes out of his way in the report to assert that the question of balance between the two cannot be meaningfully addressed.

He argued that the research councils are well qualified to decide priorities for basic research, but not as well qualified to decide what the needs of the nation are as those responsible for ensuring that they are met. Hence, decisions on the priorities for Government-funded applied research should be in the hands of the accountable departments.

Rothschild was certainly over-optimistic if he thought that all the departments could readily be made good customers for commissioned research, and the Government of the day was perhaps remiss in not giving them strong incentives to consider research on long enough time scales and with appropriate priority in times of economic decline. Nevertheless, as one who was closely involved with the consequences of the funding transfers, I believe that there are benefits to the nation and to the research bodies from the clearer lines of responsibility that resulted from his recommendation.

It is clear from the continuing debate that the way in which Government supports research is not yet a closed question. Rothschild's contribution was to clarify one of the important issues; we should analyse and use the results of the experiment he started.

Yours etc.,
A. I. REES,
(Coordinator for Commissioned Research, Institute of Oceanographic Sciences, 1974-89),
PO Box 63, Godalming, Surrey,
March 22.

From Professor A. J. Southward
Sir, Mrs Thatcher's speech at the Royal Society (report, March 23) includes a suggestion for setting up data banks to study the responses of wildlife to environmental changes. Several research organizations in the UK have already

tempted work to this end, some of them having over 70 years' data. Many of the compilers of these records have seen their efforts nullified in the past 10 years by cuts in Government support for such "open-ended" projects.

Many of these schemes came under the remit of the Marine Science Division of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). Granted Mrs Thatcher's genuine interest in plans to monitor changes in the environment, it is unfortunately too late to start new time-series to study global warming without baseline data.

I was associated for 35 years with one of our longest-running data banks on the effects of environmental changes to the sea. This series had already shown the biological effects of rising environmental temperatures in the period from 1920 to 1960 and their reversal during a period of cooling from 1962 to 1981. We were well poised to show further changes if global warming accelerated; but all work ceased in 1987 when the NERC withdrew funding.

I am keeping some of the work going as a private venture. Suggestions that the observations should be restarted in the currently improved financial climate for environmental research have been disregarded.

Yours faithfully,
A. J. SOUTHWARD,
108 Durnford Street,
Plymouth, Devon,
March 23.

Hospital land

From Dr David Eversley

Sir, Your Social Services Correspondent correctly points out (March 20, later editions) that the health regions' capital speeding programme has been badly hit by their failure to sell surplus land to house builders. The article highlights two extraordinary aspects of present-day policies in the fields of public-sector finances and of land-use planning.

Here in Hertfordshire there have been a number of appeals by the regional health authority against the refusal of the local planning authority to grant permission for high-density residential development on former hospital sites, almost wholly in the designated green belt. In one case so far the secretary of state has largely allowed the appeal.

The health authorities' appeal rests on the fact that if they cannot sell their land profitably they will lack the means to build other hospitals and to provide community care for the patients discharged from institutions. Since community care will now be largely the responsibility of local authorities, it is assumed that part of the proceeds of these land sales will go to the Treasury.

Will that body then refuse to reimburse local authorities for their newly-imposed expenditure because the budget was assumed to be met, in part, from these controversial land sales?

This seems a haphazard method of determining levels of required public expenditure, as well as using rather emotional arguments to subvert statutory green belt protection.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID EVERSELEY (Honorary Planning Adviser, Hertfordshire Conservation Society),
Hummerston, Cottered,
Buntingford, Hertfordshire,
March 20.

Effect of British Library's cash loss

From the President of the Library Association

Sir, The Minister for Arts and Libraries announced in November that the British Library was to have an extra £1 million towards the cost of planning for the move into its new building next to St Pancras station and nearly £3 million on the grant-in-aid, a welcome addition after several years of reductions in acquisitions.

The library had already decided to move some 300 jobs concerned with bibliographic services from London to its site at Boston Spa, in Yorkshire, on grounds of economy and efficiency and because there will be pressure on space in the new building, big though it is.

The Government strongly supported this decision (and has even asked whether the number of jobs could be increased). Relocation will move them away from the longer term, but the costs are inevitably high, and agreement was apparently reached last summer that proceeds from the sale of a library building in Store Street could be used for the purpose.

For some reason which has never been given, the Treasury later decided that the library can keep only half the proceeds of the sale. As a result, almost all of the extra £3 million has to be spent on relocation. The end effect is that

the library's grant-in-aid is only 1 per cent higher in cash terms than last year, at a time when inflation is above 7 per cent and the cost of library materials is rising faster than that.

This is no way to ensure the maintenance of the stock and services of one of the world's three or four greatest libraries, which ought to be a major source of national pride and which is the envy of almost every other national library (so much so that the French have decided to spend much greater sums of money on a new Bibliothèque de France).

The Treasury's decision seems quite extraordinary. It creates serious financial problems for the library; it defeats its attempts to plan its future sensibly and cost-effectively; it does damage to the rest of the nation's library system, and it evidently goes against the intentions of the minister. It would be illuminating to know how such a decision came to be made and approved.

It affects nearly all the nation's libraries which have suffered continued and serious reductions in their own funding and depend more and more heavily on the British Library's services.

Yours etc.,
MAURICE B. LINE,
President,
The Library Association,
7 Ridgmount Street, WC1.

Legal view of highways and byways

From the Chairman of the Open Spaces Society

Sir, A Diary item and a letter on the opposite page (March 17) show that motor sports are invading the world's tranquil places, from the byways around Bath to a 3,000-mile length of the Great Wall of China.

In the wilds of deepest Dorset I have found myself having to step aside, on what was technically a road but in reality an overgrown footpath, to let a line of boyracers file through on their trial, or trial bikes (both terms seem to be used).

The sole legal justification for this being a byway rests on an Easement Act award from the days of horses and carts. Such green lanes retain their pastoral character until they become the playground for an assortment of bizarre motor vehicles which share the common characteristic of looking unroadworthy and being untaxed.

Here the usurpers of ancient highways must not be allowed to have it both ways. If, as they maintain, they are using public roads, then their motor cycles and cars should be licensed, insured, and maintained in the same way as they have to be on "real" roads.

Yours faithfully,
RODNEY LEGG, Chairman,
Open Spaces Society,
25a Bell Street,
Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.

From Mr George Laurence
Sir, Mr Cheal (March 17) regrets that the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

allows a "Rapp" (road used as a public path) to be turned into a "Boat" (byway open to all traffic) on the sole criterion of historical evidence... regardless of the desirability or practical suitability of the change.

There are a number of points to be made about this.

1. Designation of a way as a Rapp or as a byway under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 left open the question whether the public were entitled to use the way with vehicles. If, however, vehicular rights did exist, nothing in the Act took them away; the 1981 Act merely seeks to ensure that the status of the way is definitively clarified rather than being left uncertain.

2. Historical evidence alone is sufficient to permit (and require) reclassification of a Rapp as a Boat. So it should be. A public carriageway set out under a duly enrolled enclosure award made pursuant to its enabling Act, for

example, plainly enjoys vehicular rights. The 1949 Act did not permit those rights to be explicitly recognised; the 1981 Act does. It could not be otherwise, without undermining the fundamental principle, "once a highway, always a highway".

3. That is the very principle which those who represent landowners are sometimes (and sometimes understandably) anxious to undermine. Even an ancient carriage-way, properly laid out as such in the early 19th century, will not necessarily provide a suitable surface for today's four-wheel drive vehicles. But unsuitability for vehicular use is not relevant when determining status.

4. The Countryside Act 1968 had provided otherwise, permitting Rapps with vehicular rights to be "downgraded" to bridleways, where the surface was unsuitable. Even in such cases, the public's vehicular rights were held not to be extinguished — *R. v. Secretary of State for the Environment, Ex parte Riley* [1989] (Journal of Planning and Environmental Law, 921). Section 54 of the 1981 Act solves the problem more logically — all "vehicular" Rapps not yet reclassified under the 1968 Act fall to be shown as Boats.

5. Difficulties arise when newly-classified Boats attract on to them motorists and motor-cyclists whose use of such ways inevitably does some damage to the surface, to the detriment of their use and enjoyment by walkers and horse riders. But that is a different problem.

Yours truly,
GEORGE LAURENCE,
9 Old Square,
Lincoln's Inn, WC2.

From Mr M. C. Simkins
Sir, The fact that a route has in the past been defined as a "Rapp" is, in my experience, normally a strong indication that, notwithstanding the fact that it may have carried only public footpath or bridleway rights when incorporated into the appropriate definitive map of public rights of way, it had the physical appearance of a road, capable of accommodating four-wheeled vehicular traffic.

Any vehicular rights which existed may have been public or may have been private, the purpose of reclassification being normally to resolve that issue.

Yours faithfully,
M. C. SIMKINS,
(Deputy County Surveyor),
City of County Council,
Shire Hall, Mold, Clwyd,
March 20.

Sistine restoration

From Miss E. H. Ramsden

Sir, George Hill reports (March 22) that an exhibition is shortly to be opened by the Pope to vindicate the cleaning and conservation of Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel.

Whether or not to clean the vault and the lunettes is a question that has raged both before and ever since the project was undertaken 10 years ago. What is certain, however, is that if the cleaning had not been undertaken we should have lost the frescoes altogether.

Even from the floor of the chapel this is evident. When examined from the scaffolding, such is the dirt and discoloration there can be no doubt. To counter the argument that Michelangelo's palette was essentially sombre, one has only to cite his newly-cleaned Doni tondo in the Uffizi.

We should all be grateful for the vision and courage displayed, notably by the Director of Operations, Dott. Fabrizio Mancinelli, and by the head restorer, Signor Gianluigi Colalucci, and his assistants.

May we hope that the restoration of Michelangelo's much mutilated altar-piece, "The Last Judgement", may now be undertaken under the same enlightened direction and the same brilliant team.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
E. H. RAMSDEN,
30 Mallord Street,
Chelsea, SW3,
March 22.

Sleeping easy

From Mr Paul Holmer

Sir, My wife and I have some sympathy with Mr Chance's (March 17) predicament. In our experience guests who cannot come to terms with a duvet are almost invariably male — perhaps occasionally an unmarried lady — and aged about 65-plus. We have found that the best policy is to take the initiative as hosts and offer friends in those categories the alternative of blankets.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL HOLMER,
Whinot House, Whichford,
Shropshire-on-Stour, Warwickshire.

Mum's the word

From Mrs Belinda Goldsmith

Sir, I spent a good two hours today scouring the shops for a "Mother's Day" card suitable for a "mother of the 1990s" — in vain. Ninety per cent of the cards depicted a staid, like female at the sink, in the kitchen, vacuuming, dusting, or sewing. Most of the messages inside the cards reinforced this impression with statements of the "Thank you for another year of scrubbing the floor — you're a great mother" variety.

Are the greeting card manufacturers hopelessly behind the times, or do their products reflect a horrible truth... that the times have still to catch up with all this talk of equality and modern man? Yours faithfully,
BELINDA GOLDSMITH,
24 King Edward Road,
Jordhill, Glasgow,
March 22.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent by fax number — (01)782 5046.

THE ARTS

Sisters and mothers

TELEVISION

Sheridan Morley

FOR *Cutting Edge* (Channel 4), Polly Bide and Helena Kennedy had a remarkable film on Sister Elaine Roulet, a Catholic nun in New York who spends much of her time reuniting children with their imprisoned and often murderous mothers. Within Bedford Hills maximum security prison she has set up a family centre. That is all the more impressive, given the brutality of a system where, elsewhere, prison guards sometimes train their guns on visiting children.

No one doubts the guilt of these mothers — indeed one coolly confessed to camera the murder she had committed. But Sister Roulet's point is that they still have small children who need parenting, children who have been known to break into jail, in an attempt at reunion. Sister Roulet has fought the local Westchester community, which objected to the children of prisoners being moved into the area, and she has now found more than 100 local households willing to put up the kids while they visit their mothers.

All moral judgments apart, it is surely evident that children should not be punished for the sins of their parents. Separation while in prison is just such a punishment. But, in Sister Roulet's view, the stigma of parental imprisonment is somewhat lessened by regular contact. Her work ought surely to be examined in some detail by penal reform commissions over here.

On *Panorama* (BBC 1) Ian Smith was looking at the increasing tension between developers and conservationists as the greening of Britain becomes more and more apparent. Not that this is always a good thing: the white cliffs of Dover now appear to be turning green as a direct result of engineers' interference, thereby necessitating not only a rewrite of the Vera Lynn lyric but also serious objections to the Channel Tunnel, which is causing all the trouble.

Conservationists perceive the regionalization of the Nature Conservancy Council as a dastardly governmental attempt to castrate it, and they could well be right. Meanwhile, Magnus Magnusson talks of "healthy creative tension" between developers and preservers. I have started, so I'll finish.

Hermann Prey, making a London Wagner debut this week, talks to Barry Millington

Birdman of Nürnberg

DONALD COOPER

When Hermann Prey takes the Covent Garden stage on Thursday night as the town clerk, Beckmesser, in John Cox's production of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, he will be rising once again to one of his favourite challenges. The pedantic critic, Beckmesser, who steals the hero Walther's song in an attempt to get the girl, is one of the least-lovable characters in opera.

But according to Prey, the traditional way of playing him — as a shambling, imbecilic buffoon — is wrong. "As the *Stadtschreiber*, or town clerk, he would have commanded respect: he is the one professional man among the Masters, the most educated, the only one with Latin." He is also head of the police and therefore the superior of the Nightwatchman, which makes it richly ironic that after the riot, which he has unwittingly provoked by his serenading, he has to hide from the Nightwatchman.

Prey believes that Beckmesser should therefore be played and sung with dignity, and quotes Wagner on the subject. After the first performance in Munich in 1868, Wagner wrote to the Viennese conductor Heinrich Esler, complaining that the singer who had created the part, Gustav Holzel, had made Beckmesser into a buffoon. He should be as serious as the other Masters: only the situation in which he finds himself makes him appear ridiculous.

Prey believes that Beckmesser's romantic infatuation with Eva also makes him act irrationally. When had Prey evolved this interpretation of Beckmesser? Was it for his famous appearance in the role at Bayreuth in 1982, in Wolfgang Wagner's production? "No, I had it in my mind long before." In the 1960s, he had been singing Wolfram in *Tannhäuser* for Wolfgang's brother Wieland.

"One day you will be my Beckmesser," Wieland had said. But Wieland had died in 1966.

Not for another 15 years was Prey invited to Bayreuth to tackle the role. He told Wolfgang Wagner that he wanted to make the character quite different from the traditional caricature.

Did Prey not find a contradiction between such a sympathetic portrayal of the character and the nature of the music Wagner gives

Hermann Prey in rehearsal on stage at Covent Garden as Beckmesser in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*

him to sing? "It is certainly very difficult to sing, but I try to sing it beautifully, like *Lieder*. For some people, it may be too beautiful."

Was he, then, devoting more of his time to *Lieder* these days? "Yes, I'm doing less opera now. There's another generation of directors and conductors coming up," he adds obliquely, by way of explanation. The idea of the Schubertiade, which he founded in Hohenems, Austria, in 1976, has been taken up elsewhere. In Vienna a similar project is in its sixth year and in New York in its third. Two more are planned, in Würzburg and Japan. In each place, the idea is that Schubert's whole oeuvre — the orchestral and chamber music as well as the songs — is performed in chronological order over a period of 10 years. The beauty of the concept, as Prey enthusiastically points out, is that the music "gets better from year to year", as the master-works of Schubert's maturity are approached.

Garden, as well as at the Wigmore Hall, the Royal Festival Hall and the Edinburgh Festival.

He clearly has a special affinity with Schubert, who "long ago became the centre of my life", and to prove it he tells a curious anecdote. Thirty years ago, when he first learnt the song-cycle *Winterreise*, he found that, try as he might, he always made the same three mistakes — small matters of rhythm and text-setting. One day, when he was allowed to study the autograph manuscript in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, he found, to his amazement, that at those same points, Schubert had originally written what he had been singing. He had unconsciously been reproducing Schubert's first thoughts. "I did wonder then if there was some connection between heaven and earth."

Performances of *Die Meistersinger* are at the Royal Opera House, Floral St, London WC2 (01-240 1066), opening on Thursday, and then on April 3, 6, 9, 12, 16.

Dissolving the borders

WORLD MUSIC

David Toop

Ryuichi Sakamoto
Dominion

"THIS is my first concert in London since YMO days," said Ryuichi Sakamoto, referring to a long-past performance given by his Japanese techno-rock trio, Yellow Magic Orchestra. "I'm a bit nervous," he admitted, "but excited." The audience had some cause to be nervous also, since trans-global musical fusion (an idiom to which Sakamoto is increasingly involved) can fall flat when transferred from the recording studios to the stage.

Sakamoto has discovered heart and feeling, though, and has discarded the role of Japanese technocrat. He calls his music "outer nationalism", a Utopian art without national boundaries, and cheerfully confesses to the personal re-awakening of hippy idealism that this suggests. Aside from the ideals, this was no hippy show. The organization of a musically and technically complex two hours was virtually flawless.

At centre-stage was Youssou N'Dour, the remarkable singer from Senegal, and to one side were

two diminutive Okinawan women in kimonos. They compensated for being the smallest musicians on stage by consistently stealing the limelight. This they accomplished by singing raucous, nasal folk melodies, emitting shrill rhythmic whistles and playing plangent-toned Japanese stringed instruments called sanshins.

On the other flank was a hyperactive percussionist, beating numerous noise-makers from Brazil and Africa. These four, with a drummer, bass-guitarist and session musician Nicky Holland playing keyboards, produced a lush, exotic and hard-hitting sound. At times, N'Dour's crying vocals blended eerily with the keening of the Okinawans and the strange timbres of electronically sampled ethnic instruments. At its most extreme, the cultural range traversed history as well as the globe. While the Okinawans played a repeated folk melody on their sanshins, Sakamoto answered with tragic chords that could have come from the pen of Mahler. The effect was moving and hypnotic.

The greater part of the set was taken from Sakamoto's superb new album, *Beauty*, but for an encore he chose to play his theme for *The Last Emperor*, describing it as one of his best hits.

Right up at the front

RECITAL

Paul Griffiths

Ixion
Purcell Room

SOON it may no longer be necessary to start every Ixion review by explaining that the ensemble takes its name from a piece by Morton Feldman. In three years, under the directorship of Andrew Toovey, it has gained a distinctive place for itself, an off-London Sinfonietta place where music is perpetually in *extremis*.

This South Bank debut concert was typically magnetized. On the one hand there were the soft sounds of Feldman's *Durations 2* for cello and piano (in which the durations could have been longer); on the other, there were rampaging armfuls of oboes in Michael Finnissy's Piano Concerto No 3 of 1978, an exhilarating piece.

James Clapperton as soloist kept on top with furious and incisive playing to the end, and

Finnissy himself, as conductor, won tense, active support from the accompanying sextet. Fiercely imaginative within a single, driven state, ending with a sour, delicious twist, this is altogether a remarkable piece.

The scoring of its accompaniment, for oboe and clarinet, cello and double bass, and two trombones, provided the ensemble for Toovey's new *Adam*, where the subtlety of Finnissy's instrumentation is exchanged for bald ostensions of pairs, often to rudimentary and aggressive gestures. There were calmer moments of much greater accomplishment, sometimes with the woodwinds sliding over one another, but again the antithesis between these and the nasty bits was brutish.

There was also a pretty shocking contrast between the Toovey and the other Ixion member's piece, Clapperton's *The Parliament of Four Funtia Beasts*, which takes its title from Robert Henryson and suggests, in bagpipe-like doodles for piano, oboe and cello, what Sautie might have done if he had gone back to discover his roots.

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Sacrifice of play for stars

THEATRE

Diane Hill

Quelque Part dans cette vie
Les Bouffes Parisiens

LIFTING a play out of one language into another can be done by faithful translation, skilful adaptation, or unabashed re-creation. Jean-Loup Dabadie opts for re-creation in his handling of *Park Your Car in Harvard Yard*, a two-hander by the American contemporary playwright Israel Horowitz.

Reworked and directed as *Quelque Part dans cette vie* (*Somewhere in This Life*), by Dabadie — who is better known as a writer of songs, sketches and film-scripts — this hard-baked, angst-laden slice of Uncle Sam becomes a mid-Atlantic, sentimental round of tea-time bread-and-butter on which to spread the jam of having the illustrious Pierre Dux and the ingenious Jane Birkin on stage together.

Like much of Horowitz's work, *Park Your Car in Harvard Yard* (the title is the American equivalent of the question jingle "The rain in Spain") takes an unblinking look at 20th-century social problems. The message is that learning opens the doors to the good life, while being deprived of it leaves one forever looking through the keyhole.

Jacob Brackish is a retired teacher whose forte during his working life was awarding zero marks to those he considered to be intellectual riff-raff, in order to scotch their university chances. After receiving a zero, Kathleen Hogan becomes his live-in housekeeper, seeking vengeance.

Dabadie's excessively clever dialogue banters over the play's dramatic depths. The glib one-liners raise laughs, but reduce Horowitz's savagely drawn characters to pastboard cutouts. The story unfolds not as a series of emotional tableaux, but as a concertina of stilted images.

His direction, too, is a curious sort of pop-up theatre. The two characters take up positions around the stage without much structured movement in between. There is a strong impression that Dux and Birkin have been left to their own devices, though the roles have been tailored to fit them like gloves, and in this respect Dabadie's verbal



Jane Birkin: halting French

handcraft is *haute couture*. Horowitz's hard-bitten school-teacher and vicious ex-student disappear, leaving the stage to Dux (one of France's most respected *hommes de théâtre*) and the English film actress Birkin, who has lived in France since her debut in Richard Lester's *The Knack*, and whose simplicity, charm and halting French have made her a regular on television chat-shows.

Dux's professionalism, experience and dramatic presence give the production the backbone it would otherwise lack. Birkin, hesitant and unsure at first, draws courage from Dux to fill out and exist in her own right within Dabadie's street-wise yet gauche character, until it is hard to know where the actress ends and the acting begins.

Yet these two perfectly attuned performances beg the question: was it necessary to sacrifice the guts of Horowitz's play in order to achieve them?

Lies a-mouldering?

Alasdair Cameron

John Brown's Body
Tramway, Glasgow

IT IS only after reading John McGrath's programme notes that his purpose in creating *John Brown's Body*, a musical march through the past 200 years of Scottish labour history, becomes clear. It is to show us that there is still a need for socialism.

In the play, however, this is far from obvious. In fact, since it begins in a green and pleasant Scotland where the women are washing their blankets in a stream, and ends with a denunciation of late 20th-century consumerism, the prevailing message seems to be essentially Luddite.

This is only one of a number of contradictory messages. Although McGrath again makes the right noises in the programme about the mistakes of the communists in Eastern Europe, in an unchallenged modification a WRAF officer wonders if Britain shouldn't be run like Stalin's Soviet Union. The idea lies dormant for a while and then returns when a caricatured Lech Walesa is used to lambast the Poles for embracing the American multinationalists. There is no attempt to ask why, just the blanket assurance that it is a bad thing. The motto seems to be: "If you see a difficult question, raise it and run". This sense that he is

dodging major issues is further heightened by McGrath's Olympian disdain for every form of socialism except, one assumes, his own. The play therefore has a decidedly pessimistic and hopeless end, which seems to hint at a dangerous power vacuum in which the working class can trust nobody.

But the essential problem is that the jolly format of songs interspersed with Dave Anderson's lovable clown routine as the "Lumpen Proletariat" means nothing can be examined properly. At the heart of *John Brown's Body* there are exciting ideas about the growth of modern industrial society. Though a 30-minute, rather recherché examination of 19th-century forms of punishment does pall, it is infinitely more interesting than the caricatured parade of Tories and class traitors which goes before and after.

The staging of the show, borrowed in equal measure from Ariane Mnouchkine's 1989, *Starlight Express* and *Les Misérables*, is interesting, although the audience risk cricking their necks. The music, apart from a couple of awful sub-Weill songs is excellent, sung and played with a conviction that is lacking in some of the acting.

But it is about time McGrath stopped concentrating on making his good nights out even better and went back to challenging us and making us think.

MARYA
by Isaac Babel
Adapted by Christopher Hampton
from a translation by Michael Glenny & Harold Shukman

Geoffrey Bayldon
Sheila Burrell
Alan Corduner
Robert Demoger
Kim Fenton
Peter Gordon
Richard Haddon-Haines
Robert Hickson
Dave Hill
Frances Jellard
Julie Legrand
Sylvester Le Touzel
Julia McCarthy
Matthew Marsh
Helen Masters
Iain Mitchell
Paul Trussell

Director: Roger Michell
Designer: William Dudley
Lighting Designer: Nick Fisher

Previews from Thursday
Press Night 3 April

Set in Petrograd in 1920, Babel's astonishing play, unperformed in the Soviet Union, presents a rich and complex panorama of ordinary people caught up in extraordinary events.

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Box Office & cc
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THE ARTS

In advance of the contemporary art fair *Art London 90*, Adrian Dannatt offers collectors financial rather than aesthetic advice

What price taste when buying art?

Trust your own taste and only buy art works that you really like? Wrong. The standard advice to anyone about to plunge into the contemporary art market is severely out of date. If you want to buy art as an investment, an object of financial as well as aesthetic appreciation, then you would probably be wise to forget all about your own taste.

If, on the other hand, you are repelled by the idea of buying art as a commodity — as just another, smart product — then you understand very little about the contemporary art market. In which case, you would be well advised to steer clear of shark-infested seas.

In theory, populist gatherings such as *Art London 90* — the fifth International Contemporary Art Fair, opening at Olympia this Thursday — are intended to do

away with the snobishness associated with buying art. Sponsored by British Airways and clearly aimed at those with money to spare but not necessarily any experience of buying art, the fair will exhibit more than 1,200 artists, whose works bear prices from £50 to £500,000. Here you will find every kind of gallery, hawking every imaginable shape and style, from photo-realistic paintings of trucks to the most minimal sculptures. But the deftly arcane codes of the international avant-garde still apply, and a serious collector is obliged to follow them. Contemporary art is both expensive and elitist.

The sharp end of contemporary art is a confusing, intellectually complex place. Real collectors, with more art than they could ever display even in a Tuscan villa or SoHo loft, know everything that is

happening, and understand latest developments in critical thinking and cultural production. They tour galleries and skim through every glossy art magazine. They know what, in American parlance, is "hot" and what is not. No auction price or bad review goes unrecorded.

For the rest of us, a few guidelines, crassly simplistic though they will seem to the connoisseurs, never buy cheap, never buy figurative, and avoid paintings done on canvas. Paintings are not really very "now", and the collector's skill depends on acute judgements of precisely when "then" becomes "now" and vice versa.

What is unmistakably fashionable is the cult of objects: artefacts that hover between self-conscious sculptures and everyday appliances, between the *objet trouvé* and the carefully crafted. If you have to ask yourself the question "Is it art?", it is worth investing in.

For sure returns, another good policy is only to buy American. Manhattan artists have far higher status, deserved or not, than London counterparts in the same field. Chauvinism, and inverted chauvinism, play a big role in contemporary art.

Cologne and FIAC in Paris are among the most important art fairs, and have recently been joined by ARCO in Madrid. Although 120 galleries from 16 countries will be exhibiting at *Art London 90*, this fair is not among the biggest players. Nevertheless, there will be interesting trends to be spotted at Olympia.

A gallery such as Salama-Caro (which is relatively new to Cork Street), is among the few which will be showing younger British artists — but its prices reflect the location. However, there are some bright, small galleries which have all the requisite international contacts — reciprocal arrangements with New York or Cologne, for instance — and are not afraid to deal in bold, complex, and often controversial young artists.

Interim Art is the ideal gallery for a new, young collector interested in contemporary work, who enjoys the challenge of the difficult and whose budget stretches from £500 (below which the object is probably not worth buying) to a few thousand pounds — which rules out more established artists. Run by Man-

reen Paley, quintessential New Yorker in exile, Interim has a spicy roster of the more conceptually-minded international artists. It is, moreover, particularly strong on "artists' multiples", pieces made in small editions — a Warhol-like concept with a decidedly high investment appeal.

Consider the case of Jenny Holzer, an extremely hot American artist who deals with subverted forms of public proclamation: official pronouncements or advertising jargon short-circuited upon itself. A year ago at Interim Art you could have bought a simple black aluminium plaque, with one of her fake clichés stamped upon it (such as "It is embarrassing to be caught and killed for stupid reasons"). In an edition of ten for £550.

Since then, however, she has had a one-woman show at the Guggenheim in New York, been chosen as sole representative of American art at the Venice Biennale, and starred in the latest film by Dennis Hopper, a collector of her work. At a Sotheby's auction last month, the same plaques were selling for £2,100. A multiple, by definition, is not unique, but it is usually rarer and more important than an etching or any type of print, few of which appreciate sufficiently to be worth buying as an investment.

Interim also represents the promising British artist Angela Bulloch, who uses what look like early-1970s lighting fixtures to build her own mysterious and atmospheric installations. Also interesting is the young British art team, Langlands & Bell, who make elegant, beautifully crafted pieces, often on the theme of architectural plans and their coded, ideological meaning. For example, their "Air Routes of North West Europe (Night and Day)", in an edition of five, look at first like austere abstraction. But when you see how they represent night and day routes, they call into question our aesthetic value-judgements: the way we assume some signs to be art and others commerce, how we daily confuse abstraction and representation.

The whole point of an Art Fair is that one should feel free to buy that little still-life etching by an unknown Swedish student. The



Not only on canvas, but figurative, so doubly unfashionable: Cameron Galt's "Vanity", shown by Houldsworth Fine Art at *Art London 90*

point of contemporary art collecting is that one should feel obliged to buy that mysterious super-market object by a New York Superstar. One may be prettier,

the other more profitable: the choice is yours.

● *Art London 90* is at London Olympia from Thursday, March 29 to April 1, open 11am-8pm each day.

Vintage tribute

VARIETY

Sheridan Morley

Cook's Tour
Shaftesbury

THE LATE Ray Cook was less famous than he should have been. The Australian pianist, conductor and arranger worked on more than 40 West End musicals between his arrival here in 1960 and his death last year. *Cook's Tour* at the Shaftesbury was a remarkable memorial to his talents.

It was also the first production by West End Cares, an organization of London theatre workers dedicated to raising money for AIDS charities. Around £60,000 was earned overnight in Cook's name by a gala which vastly improved on the usual run of throw-together Sunday charity concerts. Too often the good cause is the only good thing around.

But *Cook's Tour* reunited Angela Lansbury with Bea Arthur (from *Golden Girls*) to celebrate the *Mame* they first sang on Broadway two decades ago. It also allowed Liz Robertson to sing numbers from the *King and I* she has been touring with Nureyev, and Evelyn Laye to win a standing ovation merely by walking downstage as the one singular sensation from *Chorus Line*.

This was a celebration of British and American musical theatre at its greatest. But it was also a poignant reminder of the talents being lost through sudden death and the general evanescence of the old style big-band show. The ghosts of Bob Fosse, Michael Bennett, Gower Champion and Alan Jay Lerner were all around the Shaftesbury on Sunday night, as were some of their greatest shows. *Cook's Tour* brought back not only the scores that seem to be in constant revival — *My Fair Lady*, *Sweet Charity*, *Okla-homa!* — but also those that we have unwisely allowed to fall into disuse: *Pippin*, *Sail Away*, *Oh What a Lovely War!*

From Maria Friedman's breathtaking "I Happen to Like New York" to the veteran Elisabeth Welch in the title song from *Pippin*, this was a vintage evening. Even its ending, with two small children singing "Tomorrow" in what could have been the most appallingly sentimental of clichés, became in the context of West End Cares a moment of heartbreaking optimism.

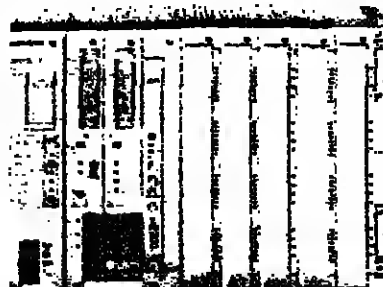
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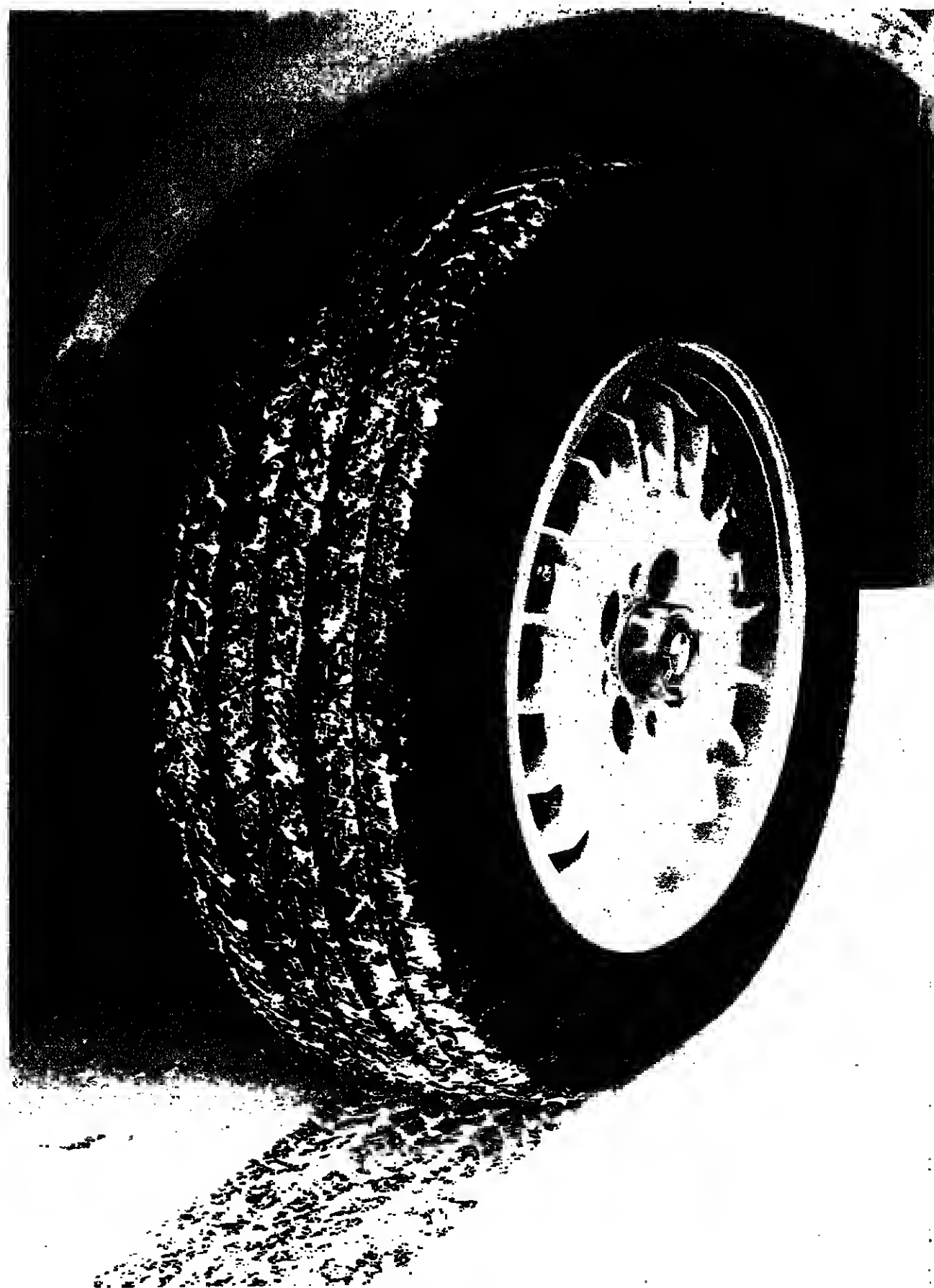
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Enter the muscular Christian

Dr Robin Eames, the Archbishop of Armagh, is a front-runner for the See of Canterbury. But how would the Church react to his dynamic and masterful style? George Hill reports

Some archbishops are as wise as serpents, and some as harmless as doves; only a few succeed in being both, as Christ recommended. The retiring incumbent of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, is manifestly a dove, though there may be reservations in Downing Street about how far he has been harmless.

The prelate most prominently tipped to succeed him, in what is a very open field, is a man of a very different mark, definitely serpent rather than dove. This may endear him more to Mrs Thatcher, who will, in effect, have the final say in the appointment, than to the churchmen who will pick the short-list of names she will choose from.

The Right Reverend Dr Robin Eames, Archbishop of Armagh, has for years moved expertly in a world of subtle diplomacy among the embattled factions that have an interest in Northern Ireland. Some who have watched his activities closely in recent years have also gained an impression of competitiveness and personal ambition. His private view of the way Dr Runcie has handled the agonisingly difficult problem of the Lebanon hostages is said to be highly critical.

As one close observer of Irish bishops has put it: "He is not a man dogged by dogma" — adding that it was difficult to distinguish the churchman in him from the politician, the bureaucrat and the diplomat.

Only a rather unworldly observer would suppose that a drive to reach the top, and thereby to maximize one's ability to do good, is necessarily a disqualification for the highest office in the Anglican Church. But, being what it is, the Anglican Church may well feel uneasy at the prospect of finding a dynamic and masterful archbishop at its head. In Aesop's fable, the frogs asked Zeus to choose them a king, and he threw a log into their pond. Finding their new ruler boring, they petitioned for a more exciting sovereign. Zeus sent a stork, who soon made

them wish the log was king again. By history and temperament, the Church tends to be more comfortable with King Log than King Stork.

There is a sharp contrast in manner and style between the two men. Runcie has a diffident, anguished air, and manifestly took scant pleasure in the prominence his office brought him. He credibly professes to be looking forward after retirement to the trivial round, the common task and the 20 black Berkshire pigs which, Emsworth-like, he has reared down in the country. In fact, there is more steel in his composition than he allows to show.

Dr Eames is a forceful mover of men and events, and is not recorded to feel impelled towards the washing up or the pigsty. He is a rugby man, and on summer weekends he is out of canonicals into oilskins as often as he can manage, sailing to win in his high-performance 30ft cruiser-racer on Strangford Lough in County Down. Bellowing "Starboard!" through the rain-squalls, he is the epitome of muscular Christianity.

Dr Eames has found himself much in the limelight in recent years, and has shown every sign of enjoying it. He became Anglican Primate of All Ireland in 1986, and has interpreted his role much as one of mediator between communities and politicians. He knows Margaret Thatcher fairly well, and Charles Haughey rather better. He has the ear of the chief constable, the cardinal, and the SDLP, and his contacts with the Orange Lodges are close.

The qualities of the dove must in some measure be an essential qualification for such a role, and the pastoral requirements have at times been harrowing. He has buried scores of victims of sectarian violence, and in 1987 he had to help families of victims of the Enniskillen bombing as they identified the shattered remains of their loved ones. He has written a book about the problem of suffering.

In 1988, Dr Runcie appointed



Heir to the Runcie throne? The Right Reverend Dr Robin Eames, a prime mover of men and events, forcefully critical of the Church's handling of the hostage crisis

him chairman of an international commission in the Anglican Communion on the ordination of women. This key role in the most acute debate within the Church today guaranteed him a high profile on the national, as well as the provincial stage. By general consent, he has played the dove to some effect here, too, by leading the commission towards a set of proposals which are likely to prove acceptable to most parties.

Limelight is unavoidable in these roles. But it is whispered that he has backed into it with more gusto than is altogether befitting. Some journalists in Northern Ireland believe that they detect a thinly disguised strategy to promote his claims to the top job. He takes his public image, as portrayed in the newspapers, very seriously indeed.

Last week Dr Eames gave an interview to a local news radio station in Ulster, in which he flirted with the possibility of glory in an almost Heseltinian way. He was speaking before Dr Runcie had announced his retirement, but very much as a publicly tipped member of the bunch of front-runners in a contest that was sure

to take place within two years, before Dr Runcie reached the age of compulsory retirement.

Asked about his feelings about a possible preference to Canterbury, he replied: "It is not possible for anyone to say they would welcome or not welcome any challenge. You have to acknowledge when you are ordained in the Church that you have to look at every challenge given to you and say: 'Is that what you think. God is asking you to do?'"

The interviewer asked him about reports that he is highly regarded in Downing Street. "As far as the Prime Minister is concerned, she has shown at times, I think, a willingness to listen to anything that I have had to say, as she has listened to so many other people," he replied. "I find that what people say (is) that she seems to acknowledge some of the things I have said and done — well, I hope she listens to them."

A hint at what sort of omelette he might prove to be at Lambeth may be gained from a report of a source close to him about his private view of the way

the Runcie administration has handled the problem of Terry Waite and the other hostages in the Middle East.

He is said to have been critical in his comments. He felt that basic lines of inquiry had been followed up too weakly in the months following the kidnapping of Terry Waite, and that the episode showed signs of hesitancy. Underlying his comments, it is said, was a clear assumption that given the chance, he would adopt a more upbeat and possibly interventionist strategy to bring the hostages home.

His Ulster experience perhaps gives him claims to feel that he understands the psychology of the gunmen better than Dr Runcie. He has had great experience at working behind the scenes to bring people together across the divide of tribal enmity.

But the suggestion of an eagerness to set about knocking heads together and sorting the terrorists out is likely to strike a pang of dread in the devotees of the Church of England. The Anglican Church is a structure which has designed itself with a multiplicity of checks and balances, to the

point where every interest-group can be confident that though it may never get its own way, it can ensure in perpetuity that its opponents never do.

He happens to have one further characteristic which may intensify the pang of dread. He is only 52 years old, which is young for the See of Canterbury. Dr Runcie was aged 59 when he was enthroned, and most of the other serious contenders this time round are in their late fifties or early sixties. It is not so much the prospect of an archbishop too young to give due weight to the office, that may create fear (it is one of Dr Eames's strengths, in fact, that he is an excellent performer on television), as the prospect that an archbishop aged 52 would have up to 18 years ahead of him in the hot seat. A man could do much with his hands on the levers of power for so long a period. Barring illness, Mrs Thatcher could be choosing an archbishop well into the next century.

Mrs Thatcher may not be at all averse to the prospect of a strong Archbishop. But the selection is not entirely in her hands. She can

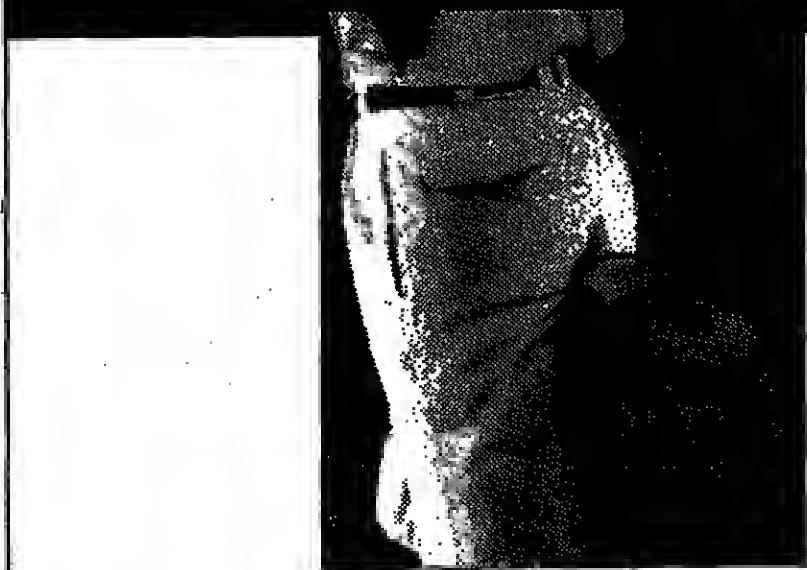
only choose between the names on a short-list of two submitted to her by a commission of churchmen. She could reject both and hold out for the candidate she prefers, at the cost of a considerable fuss reopening the whole vexed question of the relationship between the Church and the secular power.

In practice, the name of Dr Eames will be quite difficult to keep off the short-list whatever body of opposition there is to the Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury is head not only of the Anglican Church but also of the whole Anglican Communion of 80 million souls.

It would be diplomatically to acknowledge this fact by short-listing a bishop from outside England, but there are many candidates who would have difficulty in taking the necessary oath of loyalty to the British Crown. Eames, as a contender who is British but not English, will have strong claims to a place on the list.

If he is there, even in second place, the Prime Minister will be free to consider whether or not she would like to provide the Church with King Stork.

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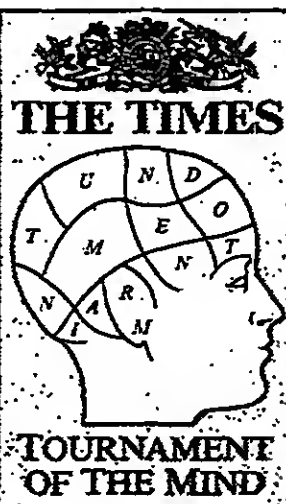
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Tournament of the Mind

● Round 19, the penultimate round of Tournament of the Mind, is one of the most difficult. Mensa devised the questions to increase in difficulty as the competition progressed. A postal address for entries will be given tomorrow.
● Thousands of readers are playing for £5,000 or, for the school teams, a Hewlett Packard computer. But all who enter the Tournament will receive a certificate. Those who score above a certain level will get personalized certificates in bronze, silver and gold.

1. VERBAL

Two words have been overlapped. Both words have the letters printed in their correct order, but one word reads from left to right, the other reads from right to left. There are also two bogus letters included in the list. What are the two words?

N P R I E C T T A E R L E E S V Q O U E N

2. LOGIC

Your clock was correct at midnight but gains 16 minutes per hour. The clock now shows 2.15pm but it stopped exactly one hour ago. What is the correct time?

3. MATHS

A snail has crawled up a slope. It covered the following distances: 10 inches, 15 inches, 20 inches and 25 inches in the following respective speeds: 6 inches per hour, 5 inches per hour, 7 inches per hour, and 4 inches per hour. However, the snail slid back over each distance at the respective rates of: 3 inches per hour, 2 inches per hour, 1 inch per hour and 1 inch per hour. How long did it take to cover the total distance?

4. DIAGRAMS

How many squares can be constructed within this diagram? Each corner of each square must rest on a dot.

MISCELLANY

Which continually active volcano has an altitude of 19,347 feet?

ROUND 19 — ANSWERS

Cut out this coupon and keep your answers until Round 20. Answers will be accepted only on coupons published in *The Times*

PUZZLES

Answer 1

Answer 2

Answer 3

Answer 4

MISCELLANY

Answer

NAME

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THE FIRST STEP by a recent, young double amputee

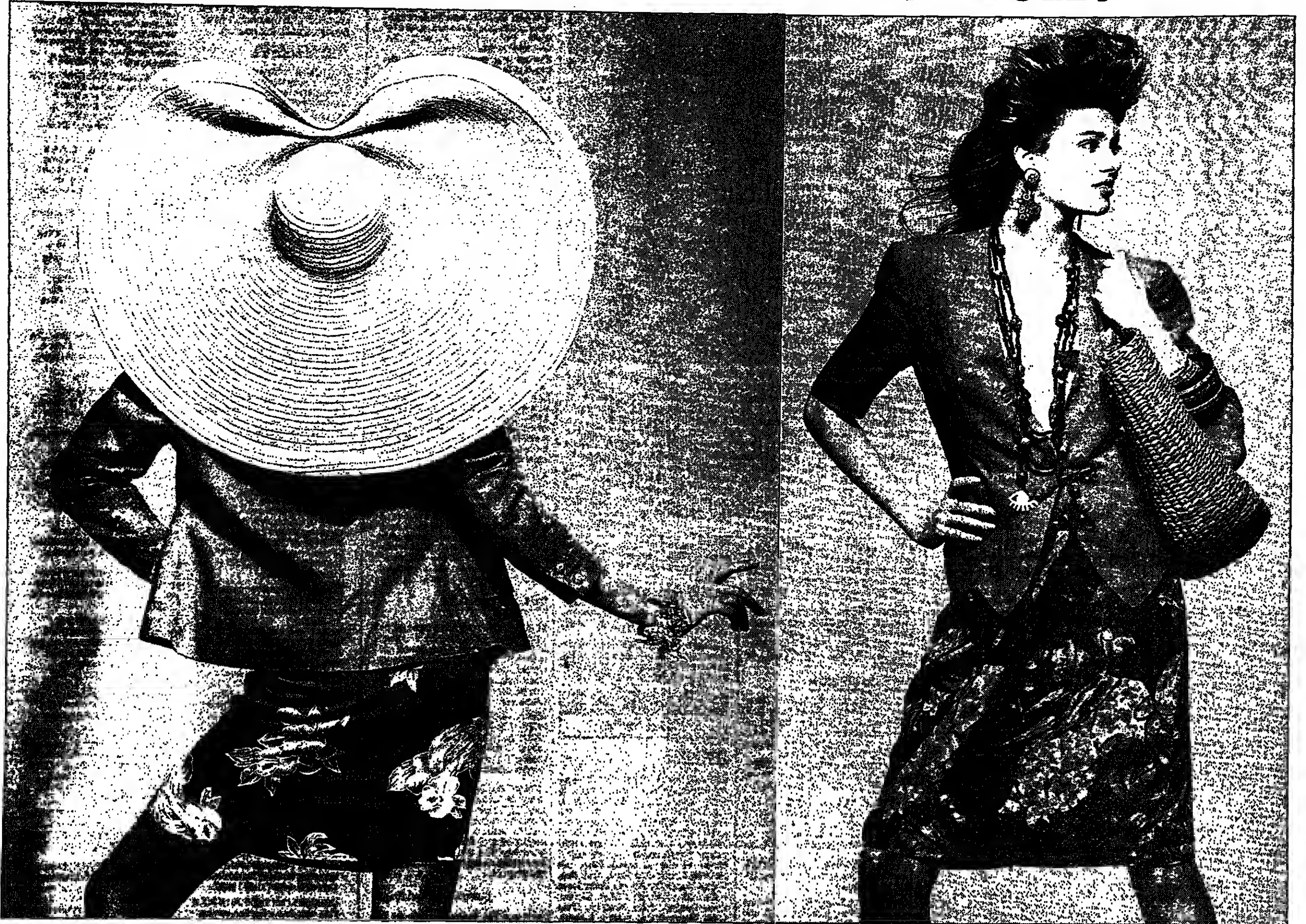
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FASHION by Liz Smith

In the heat of the moment



It's a jungle out there, complete with parrots, palms and pareos, as a tropical storm of exotic clothes sweeps through the stores

The flower-splashed pareos of Gauguin's Tahitian beauties have always held a mesmeric attraction for fashion designers. Exuberant flowers and exotic fauna from his Polynesian paradise have regularly been plundered for inspiration.

The uninhibited surge of colour and pattern in the shops this season is clearly Gauguinesque in spirit. Fashion followers can succumb to their sybaritic instincts and escape to a stylish, tropical Eden. Even the languorous glamour of the pareo — simply, for the purposes of everyday clothing, a wrap skirt — is now firmly established as the easy way to disrupt the boring formality of the basic suit.

Palm fronds sway on the new season's swimsuits and matching pareos, while gold fringing takes fashion close to the hula skirt. Hibiscus pink and coral linen jackets slip over skirts that are only a hook and eye and a few cunningly ready-lined swags away from a Bali Ha'i-style pareo. It is hardly surprising that many stores have felt inspired to plot a course for some far-flung destination as the theme for this season's promotional thrust.

Captain Cook's third voyage to the South Pacific is recorded in a display of engravings in Harrods' Central Hall, while up on the fashion floor the racks of Polynesian sarongs and colourful prints prove that when scouring markets for their "From the Ends of the Earth" promotion, the Harrods team found particular riches in Gauguin's tropical paradise.

Liberty is celebrating the vibrant arts and crafts of Mexico from April 5. Alongside the sort of tin and papier maché bird-cages and picture frames you might find in an Oaxaca market, there are colourfully embroidered Sunday-best shirts and smocks from Mexico and Guatemala, its neighbour, perfectly in tune with fashion's enthusiasm for the ethnic.

There is even a heady whiff of the exotic in Marks & Spencer, with jungle printed cotton sarong skirts and good-looking chambray shirts with an embroidered bib front, both at £19.99.

But it is Selfridges which has set its sails most purposefully in the direction of the South Seas. The whole store is awash in the lush colours of the South Pacific, not just in the vivid blues breaking over coral and sand on the main fashion floor, but with shells, pearls and raffia crafted into jewellery, bags and belts in the accessories department. Butler & Wilson's luscious pineapple pin, for example, costs £28, with matching ear clips for the same price and a bracelet at £58.

Parrots, toucans and blue macaws have colonized the china department. Hibiscus, orchids and palms burst in tropical profusion in the flower shop. Fish *vakalola* with tapioca, followed by guava tart, is on the lunch menu in the restaurant. Only the swish of surf on silver sand is missing.

Escada, Yarell and Ovi Set are labels to look for when investing in the more tailored "beachcomber" style. Armani's less expensive Mani line includes soft sarong skirts to wear with his classic, muted check jackets with their easy, collarless line.

The tropical mood in fashion can be captured equally well with more classic, and some might say more chic, shades of white and sand. A high-necked, long-line tunic or short-sleeved safari jacket can be buttoned over trousers, the fashionable knee-length shorts, or a soft, silky wrap-over skirt for the new look.

And down in Selfridges' basement, Thomas Cook is even running a competition to win a holiday in Fiji. *Aave nava mahana* — wonderful days.



HOTLINE

Softest sell

THE names above the shop fronts along Bond Street have steadily switched in recent years from British to foreign. But last week Ballantyne, the cashmere company, bucked this trend by opening its first store there, smack between Givenchy and Hermès. One of British fashion's spectacular export successes, it flies the flag in the new shop in the classic shape of the British cashmere cardigan, with its traditional grosgrain ribbon binding, fashionably buttoned in gilt.

The cardigans, priced at £220 for cashmere or £75 for superfine merino wool, look irresistible neatly stacked on slate and cherrywood shelves in Ballantyne's spectrum of delicious colours. Displays of smart striped *mariniers*, buttoned-tab sweaters and traditional V-necks for men and women transform the shop into a sumptuous cocoon.

Alistair Blair, the Scottish designer recently appointed at Balmain ready-to-wear in Paris, introduced his cashmere collection for Bal-

lantyne. Ronald Miller, head of the Dawson International group, the world's largest cashmere processors whose star performers include Braemar, Pringle, Barrie, Glenmac and McGeorge as well as Ballantyne, says that price is not an issue. "Cashmere is the diamond of our textile industry," Miller says with pride.

Guiding lights

WHAT do Princess Margaret, Glenda Jackson, Anita Roddick, Kim Wilde, Clare Short and Sally Oppenheimer have in common? The indelible fashion experience of being buttoned inside the blue shirt and navy skirt of the Girl Guide uniform, complete with scarf and woggle, that has been little changed for 80 years. All are invited to the London fashion show on April 18 when Brownies, Guides, Rangers and Young Leaders of all shapes and sizes will parade the new uniforms that have taken Jeff Banks and his design team two years to develop. Regional fashion shows will follow.

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Above: Paprika linen jacket, £195, Mani; Gauguin-inspired printed sarong, £78, Yarell; yellow straw basket, £19.90, Benetton; all Selfridges, W1. Venetian glass earrings, £44.95; metal/wood necklace, £115; coiled bead bracelet, £44.95; raffia bangles from £19.95, Liberty, W1.

Above left: Hibiscus pink linen jacket, £185, Mond; pineapple-printed sarong skirt, £49, La Blanca; cartwheel hat in yellow straw, £29.95; starfish charm bracelet, £29.95; all Selfridges.

Left: Brightly-embroidered Guatemalan shirt in thick cream cotton, £48, Marilyn Garrow at Liberty. Shorts in printed silk, £82, Nicole Farhi; white straw hat, £10.50, Sandra Phillips; both Selfridges. Venetian glass earrings, £195, Liberty.

Far left: Panther-print swimsuit, £36.95, Exposay; wooden cuffs, from £6; all Selfridges. Raffia hoop earrings, £15.95, Liberty. Grass skirt and raffia lei/lant by the "Pacific Way" exhibition at the Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, W8.

Make-up by Charlie Duffy. Hair by Ayo for Dobson & Davison. Photographs by CLIVE ARROWSMITH.

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NATIONAL PET REGISTER

I enclose £5.00 for registration of my pet on the National Pet Register. Please send identification disc and registration form.

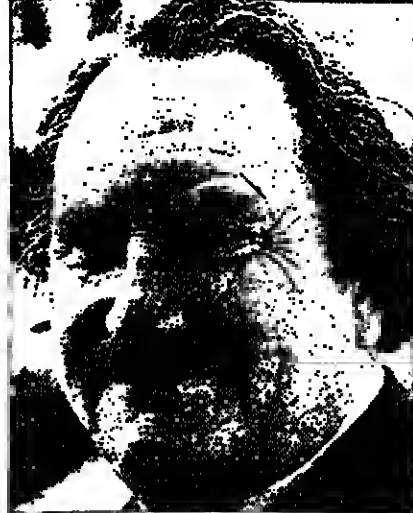
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TELEVISION & RADIO

Compiled by Peter Dear
and Stephanie BillenTroubled
times at
toy-townTELEVISION CHOICE
Peter Waymark

● Sir John Harvey-Jones was clearly wasted running ICI. He should have opted for television years ago, such is his effortless command of the medium. The idea behind *Troubled Times* (BBC2, 9.50pm) is that he acts as a business doctor, diagnosing the problems and suggesting remedies for companies in



Devastating character: business doctor Sir John Harvey-Jones (BBC2, 9.50pm) trouble. In Manchester to apply his expertise to the ailing toy firm, Tri-ang, he is charming but devastating. The company, he declares, is suffering from weak management, an inefficient factory and clapped out machinery. Sidney, the boss, a man who talks entirely in clichés, is branded as "old fashioned and autocratic." Sir John accuses him of being anti-union. "I believe in unions," says Sidney, "in other words, I believe in the company." Much has happened at Tri-ang since Sir John's first visit and the sceptical may feel that the real world of business is a little more complicated than this television construct, watchable though it is.

● Peru's leading novelist, Mario Vargas Llosa, is attempting to emulate a fellow writer, Vaclav Havel, and become president of his country. Nicholas Shakespeare's excellent film for Omnibus (BBC1, 10.35pm) follows him on the campaign trail while using his excursion into politics as the peg for a wider profile. The material is rich: a series of semi-autobiographical books, two wives, one an aunt and the other a cousin, 18 years of exile in Europe and a political outlook that has swung all the way from Marxism to Thatcherism. Llosa is clearly a reluctant politician but if he wins he will have the awesome job of rescuing a country on the point of collapse.

● Enthusiastically presented by Michael Jackson (no relation), *The Beer Hunter* (Channel 4, 8.30pm) sets out to prove that beer is as interesting as wine, with as many distinctive varieties and subtleties of flavour. His exploration begins in Belgium, where he works his way through a huge meal in which every course is accompanied by a different beer. Like any wine buff he talks knowledgeably about bouquet, palate and finish and maintains that the beer world, too, has its burgundies and champagnes.

● If Uncle Joe ever took home movies, none of them turns up on *Stalin* (ITV, 10.35pm). Concluding the trilogy, this study of war and Cold War is a portrait of Stalin's Soviet Union rather than of the man himself, who remains elusive.

BBC 1

6.00 *Celestial*
6.30 BBC Breakfast News with Jill Dando and Nicholas Witcher. Includes regular news bulletins, business reports, sports summaries, regional news, weather, travel information and a review of the morning newspapers by Paul Cullen. 8.55 Regional news and weather.

8.00 News and weather followed by *Open Air*. Viewers comment on yesterday's television programmes. To contribute ring the bell on 081 814 0424.

9.30 *Kilroy*. Robert Kilroy-Gibbs chairs a studio discussion on suicide.

10.00 News and weather followed by *Turnabout* (r).

10.25 *Children's BBC*. Introduced by Simon Pegg. Includes *Playdays* 10.30 *Jimbo and the Jet Set* (r) 10.55 *Five to Eleven*. Gary Watson reads extracts from the Gospel of Mark.

11.00 News and weather followed by *Open Air*. Gloria Hunniford and Jayne Irving meet award-winning actress Julie Walters.

12.00 News and weather followed by *Daytime Live*. Includes advice on male grooming from fashion and style expert Steve Wally. Presented by Andy Craig and Judi Spiers. 12.55 Regional news and weather.

1.00 *One O'Clock News* with Philip Heyton. Weather.

1.30 *Neighbours* (Ceefax) 1.50 *Turnabout*. Another round of *Rob Curling's* word power quiz game.

2.15 *Film: Sweeney* (1951 b/w). Sub-Cassablanca romantic comedy starring Humphrey Bogart as an ex-convict who becomes a rebel gunrunner in 1930s Damascus. Complications arise when he falls for a woman, played by Rita Hayworth. Directed by Curtis Bernhardt.

3.50 *Bodger and Badger* (r) 4.05 *Hockey Wolf* (r) 4.15 *Jackpot*. John Sessions with part two of William Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. *Top Gear* 4.35 *The Really Wild Show*. Wildlife series (Ceefax).

5.00 *Newsround* 5.10 *Grumpy*. Episodes (r) 5.35 *Newsround* (Ceefax).

6.00 *Six O'Clock News* with Anna Ford and Peter Sissons. Weather.

6.30 *Regional News* Magazines.

7.00 *Holiday 90*. *EastEnders* Ethel (Gretchen Franklin) takes a break from Albert Square and travels to Ragley Hall in Warwickshire. Kathy Taylor visits the world's highest waterfall, Angel Falls, in Venezuela; and David Jessel discovers a cheap way of taking the family to Venice. (Ceefax).

7.30 *EastEnders* (Ceefax).

8.00 *To the Manor Born*. Audrey (Penelope Keith) complains to Richard (Peter Bowles) about his use of the estate as a base for his multinational grocery business (r). (Ceefax).

8.30 *A Question of Sport*. Bill Beaumont and Ian Botham are joined by Karen Briggs, John Regis, Rory Underwood and Steve McMahon. David Coleman is the questionmaster. (Ceefax).

9.00 *Nine O'Clock News* with Martin Lewis. Regional news and weather.

9.30 *Follow Your Nose*. Lenny Henry in Uganda. The first of a series of five daily reports explaining how money raised by last year's *Red Nose Day* was spent. Today, Lenny Henry visits Gulu in north Uganda, which has suffered a long series of climatic disasters but now, thanks to relief, a development project is improving the situation, providing a more hopeful future for its inhabitants. (Ceefax).

9.45 *Making Out*. In tonight's episode of Debbie Horsfield's bawdiest, hard-edged drama, Donna is constantly bombarded by demands from her young daughter, realises that motherhood is not as she expected. (Ceefax).

10.35 *Omnicore: The Story of the Man Who Would Be President*. (See Choice).

11.35 *Film 90* with Barry Norman. A special report on last night's Oscar ceremony from Tom Brook, where Shirley Hynes plays with Pauline Collins's *Shirley Valentine*. Daniel Day-Lewis's *My Left Foot* and Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V*.

12.05 *International Cricket*. Highlights of the fourth day's play in the third Test between West Indies and England in Port of Spain, introduced by Tony Lewis.

12.35 *Weather*.

ITV/LONDON

6.00 *TV-am* begins with News and Good Morning Britain, presented by Linda Mitchell and Tom 7.00, by Mike Morris and Corinne Kelly. Includes coverage of the Oscar awards ceremony from Hollywood with Robert Costello. 7.55 After News. With fashion expert Merril Thomas on spring and summer fashions.

9.25 *The Pyramid Game*. Quiz show hosted by Steve Jones. 8.55 *Thames News* and weather.

10.00 *The Time ... The Place ... The People*. Mike Scott chairs a discussion on a topical subject.

10.40 *This Morning*. Magazine series presented by Richard Madeley and Judy Finnigan. Today's edition includes financial advice, needlecraft class and a feature on exploring the world of the hedgehog. With national and international news at 10.55 and regional news at 11.55 followed by national weather.

12.10 *Rad, Jane and Freddy* (r) 12.30 *Home and Away*.

1.00 *News at One* with John Suchet. Weather. 1.20 *Thames News* and weather.

2.00 *TV Weekly*. Anne Diamond takes a weekly look behind the scenes of ITV's popular programmes. 2.30 *Talks the High Road*. Four months on and investigation is coming to terms with the results of his actions.

3.00 *Sounds Like Music*. Pianist Bobby Short introduces a second series of the quiz show in which three contestants test their knowledge of stage and film music. 3.30 *Thames News* and weather. 3.50 *The Young Doctors*.

4.00 *Old Mike Tubb*. A new 13-part animated series by Mark Hall and Brian Cogrove, based on Kenneth Grahame's classic novel *Wind in the Willows*. Directed by Peter Jackson. A 13-part drama series set in a state boarding school. 4.50 *Scoby Doo*.

5.10 *Bookbusters*. General knowledge quiz game for teenagers presented by Bob Holness.

5.40 *News with Nicholas Owen*. Weather.

6.00 *Home and Away* (r).

6.25 *Thames News* and weather followed by *Crimestoppers*.

6.50 *Thames Help*. The first of three programmes on mental handicap.

7.00 *Emmerdale*. (Oracle) the crisis in the Metropolitan Police's efforts to recruit and retain young men and women from the ethnic minorities.

8.00 *The Bill*. One of the Boys. DC Martelli finds that sex is just as prevalent now that he is in the CID (Oracle).

8.30 *After Henry*. Gentle comedy starring Penelope Keith as a widow with an intrusive mother and headstrong teenage daughter. With John Sanderson and Janine Wood.

9.00 *Chancer*. Trust. Another crisis for the aggressive Crane when merchant banker James Blake informs Robert Underwood and Steve McMahon. David Coleman is the questionmaster. (Ceefax).

10.00 *News at Ten* with Alastair Burnet and Julia Somerville. Weather. 10.30 *Thames News* and weather.

10.35 *Stalin* (See Choice).

11.35 *News*. Sunday. Durrant in London and Leonid Zolotarevsky in Moscow use the warming political climate and the latest satellite technology to exchange clips from the news bulletins of each country and to discuss the week's events.

12.05 *Film: The Horror of Frankenstein* (1970) starring Ralph Bates, Kate O'Mara, Graham James and Vernon Dobson. Traditional material re-worked as black comedy in this final splatter from the Hammer horror factory. Directed by Jimmy Sangster.

2.00 *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. Man from the Sea. In his last episode an old man and his younger friend strike an unusual bet. Starring John Huston, Kim Novak and Tippi Hedren (r). Followed by *News*.

2.30 *Debutante* plays host to members of the cast of *St Elmo's*, the comedy drama soap set in a Boston hospital.

3.30 *Quiz Night*. Intra pub and club quiz teams compete in a quiz competition hosted by Ross King.

4.00 *Entertainment UK*. Weekly guide to the latest in film, music, video and theatre from all over the country.

5.00 *ITV Morning News* with Phil Roman. Ends at 6.00.

BBC 2

7.10 *Open University: A Question of Control*. Ends at 7.35.

8.00 *News at 8.15* Westminster.

9.00 *Coast to Coast*. See Cloud, the biggest baroque to sail under the US flag (r) 2.55 *The Travel Show* UK Mini Guides. Loch Ness and Inverness (r).

9.30 *News* and weather followed by *Westminster Live* 9.50 *News*, regional news and weather.

4.00 *The Splice Jones Show* (b/w). Vintage comedy. The guest is Hugh Herbert 4.30 *Plunder*. Roy Hudd selects favourite film and television clips from the BBC's archives.

5.00 *Afternoon Show* in the community 5.30 *Gardeners' World* (r).

6.00 *The Nifties* (1935 b/w) starring Philip Grable, Bert Wheeler and Robert Woolsey. A musical comedy whodunnit directed by George Stevens.

7.20 *Young Musicians of the Year*. The Wind seminals.

8.00 *Open Space*. An Education in Fear. Most children can cope with school but a few simply cannot. Former teacher Patricia Knox does not think they are stupid, stupid or lazy, and explains why she thinks the conventional approach to the problem is not the right one.

8.30 *Top Gear*. A new series begins with a look at London. Aleric Walker's bid to win the Ladies World Rally Championship. William Woollard goes to a school in Faversham to see how French schoolchildren study.

9.00 *Quantum Leap*. Time-traveller physicist Sam Beckett finds himself back in 1981 as a 17-year-old Californian.

9.50 *Troubled Times* (See Choice).

10.30 *Newsnight*. A new series begins with a look at London. Aleric Walker's bid to win the Ladies World Rally Championship. William Woollard goes to a school in Faversham to see how French schoolchildren study.

11.10 *The Late Show* includes a comparison between Gothic cathedrals and contemporary office buildings. 11.55 *Weather*.

12.00 *Open University: 16 Plus*. The Sheffield Story. Ends at 12.30am.

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CHANNEL 4

6.00 *The Channel Four Daily* 6.25 *Schools*

12.30 *The Parliament Programme* presented by Sue Cameron

1.00 *Sesame Street*

2.00 *The Senior Services*. News, information and advice for older viewers. Includes *Stay Not Out*. Shaw Taylor looks at what the effects will be on home help services when they are privatized. (Oracle)

2.45 *Black Forest Clinic*. Tautous medical drama soap (r)

3.35 *Murphy's Brown*. Cartoon

3.40 *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. This afternoon the overweight Oprah meets the underweight Danny DeVito and his *Wit of the Fosse* co-star Michael Douglas

4.30 *Countdown*

5.00 *The Love Ranger* (b/w). The masked defender of the good and his Indian assistant do battle with fraudulent rainmakers

5.30 *Dimension 7*

6.00 *Gophers* Last in the comedy series

6.30 *The Cosby Show*. Award winning domestic comedy series (r)

7.00 *Channel 4 News* with John Snow and Zelnah Badawi

7.50 *Comment* followed by *Weather*

8.00 *Not Pots*. The craft series continues with a contrasting the work of two weavers. One designs fabrics for mass-production, while the other weaves one-off items. (Oracle)

8.30 *The Bear Hunter*. (Oracle) (See Choice)

9.00 *Out on Tuesday*. Beatrix Campbell presents this gay and lesbian magazine series. Tonight's programme features Poldisaka, a film investigating sexual politics in Poland

10.00 *Highland*. An undercover policeman, trying out a new surveillance exercise in the classroom, causes much excitement

10.30 *Rock Steady*. Includes Dave Edmunds at London's Town and Country Club

11.30 *Absolutely*. Off-beat humour from Morwenna Banks, Peter Bakke and Moray Hunter (r)

12.15 *Sam Film: Unholy City* (1979). Tense drama starring Deborah Harry, in her screen debut, and Dennis Lipcomb. A husband's obsession with catching a petty thief leads to tragedy. Directed by Mark Reicher. Ends at 1.45

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SATellite

SKY ONE

6.00am International Business Report 6.30 European Business Channel 6.00 The DJ Kat Show 6.30 Panel Pot Pourri 10.00 The New Price is Right 1

BUSINESS

SECTION 2

TUESDAY MARCH 27 1990

● BUSINESS AND FINANCE 23-29
● LAW 30-31
● SPORT 37-42

Executive Editor
David Brewerton

THE POUND

US dollar
1.6135 (+0.0105)
W German mark
2.7684 (+0.0245)
Exchange index
86.8 (+0.7)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share
1813.5 (+17.4)
FT-SE 100
2298.2 (+14.3)
USM (Datastream)
142.30 (-0.24)

Market report, page 28

Brent rises to £12.9m

BRENT CHEMICALS' pre-tax profits rose by 15 per cent to £12.9 million in the year to December. Turnover rose by 11 per cent to £374 million and earnings per share by 2 per cent to 13.1p.

After a total gain from disposals of £17.5 million, Brent now has net cash of £29 million. The final dividend goes up by 0.65p to 5.4p, leaving the total 13 per cent higher at 6.8p.

Tempus, page 24

TT surges

TT GROUP, managed by a former Hanson acquisitions manager, Mr John Newman, reports pre-tax profits of £8.42 million for the year ended December compared with £3.58 million previously. Turnover rose from £28 million to £60.9 million. A final dividend of 2.5p (2p) makes 4p (3p) for the year.

Tempus, page 24

STOCK MARKETS

New York: Dow Jones 2721.85 (+17.57)
Nikkei AV 31840.49 (+1468.33)
Hong Kong: Hang Seng 3014.02 (+39.86)
Amsterdam: CDS Tendency 116.0 (+1.3)
Sydney: CAC 521.52 (+5.22)
Frankfurt: DAX 1567.4 (+21.3)
Brussels: General 6142.08 (+3.10)
Paris: CAC 521.52 (+5.22)
Zurich: SMI 391.2 (-4.3)
London: FT-A All-Share 1813.5 (+17.4)
FT-30 1813.5 (+17.4)
FT-100 2298.2 (+14.3)
FT-SE 100 2298.2 (+14.3)
Recent issues Page 26
Closing prices Page 27

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

RBS: Barclays 586p (+11p)
MENE: 187p (+11p)
Wm Low 301p (+12p)
Tavener 110p (+6p)
Black & Leisner 72p (+3p)
Conder Group 905p (+20p)
Bovater 454p (+10p)
Channing 175p (+10p)
Radient Metal 143p (+15p)
Eurotunnel Units 570p (+20p)
Rush & Tompkins 157p (+17p)
Royal 497p (+15p)
Sibie 445p (+10p)

FALLS:
SA Breweries 550p (-10p)
Liberty 425p (-10p)
Laird Property 567p (-32p)
Britannia 567p (-24p)
J Laff 272p (-11p)
DAKS Simpson A 432p (-15p)
Bly (Himeladen) 953p (-10p)
Closing prices:
Bursaria 2893p
SEAG Volume 353.3m

INTEREST RATES

London Bank Base: 15%
3-month interbank 15% (15%)
3-month sterling bills 14% (14%)
US Prime Rate 10%
Federal Funds 8%
3-month Treasury Bills 7.84-7.82%
30-year bonds 100% (100%)

CURRENCIES

London: New York: £/\$ 1.6135 (+0.0105)
£/DM 2.7684 (+0.0245)
£/FF 166.64 (+1.0245)
£/Yen 166.64 (+1.0245)
£/Index 86.8 (+0.7)
ECU £0.739564 SDR £0.808520
£/ECU 135.14 £/SDR 136.627

GOLD

London Fixing: AM \$370.25 pm \$370.25
close \$367.50-368.50 (\$228.00-228.50)
New York: Comex \$366.40-366.90

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (May) \$18.50/bbl (\$18.25)
Denotes latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

Bank	Bank	Bank
Australia S	20.25	18.05
Austria S	20.25	18.05
Belgium F	1.87	1.87
Canada C	1.36	1.36
Denmark Kr	10.36	10.36
France F	6.55	6.55
Germany DM	2.29	2.29
Italy Lira	2030	2030
Japan Yen	163.26	163.26
Netherlands Gld	3.235	3.235
Norway Kr	11.77	11.77
Portugal Esc	200	200
Spain Ptas	166.64	166.64
Sweden Kr	10.36	10.36
Switzerland Fr	2.29	2.29
Turkey Lira	4.80	4.80
USA \$	1.6135	1.6135
Yugoslavia Dnr	1.87	1.87

Rates for small denominations bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers cheques.
Retail Price Index: 123.2 (February)

Restructure at Isosceles as sale talks fail

By Gillian Bowditch

ISOSCELES, the company that made the debt-financed £2 billion bid for Gateway, the supermarket group, last summer, needs to restructure its finances to avoid breaching an important covenant.

The restructuring follows an announcement that talks between Isosceles and Wm Low, the Scottish supermarket group, for Low to buy 81 of Gateway's northern stores for £212 million, have fallen through.

The deal collapsed on Friday evening, and Mr David Smith, Isosceles's chief executive, flew to the US the same night to talk to Wasserstein Perella and Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company, the US shareholders who hold 40 per cent of the company.

The restructuring is likely to take the form of a subscription for new equity from existing shareholders, although other schemes are being considered. The possibility of an immediate flotation was considered but ruled out.

Speaking from the US, Mr Smith said Isosceles intended to keep and run the northern stores and had no immediate plans to sell Hermans, the US sportsware retailer.

This means Isosceles is about £300 million bigger than had been assumed under the original financing plans and the covenant on interest cover is in danger of being broken.

Mr Smith said: "We are

looking to restructure the equity element of our financing before the end of the year. We could go for a much earlier flotation than planned but at present we're looking to do it within our own equity group."

He said the banks financing the £1.3 billion of debt and the shareholders speaking for £200 million of equity backed the company's decision to pull out of talks with Low. "They all agree that we should not do a deal which undervalues any part of our business."

Mr Smith said the deal with Low fell through for two main reasons. Isosceles did not know of Low's plans to sell on 30 per cent of the stores to the Co-operative Wholesale Society for about £50 million when it reached an agreement with Low in February.

In addition, he said, Low was not prepared to buy additional warehouses and developments which were to be valued separately.

Mr Smith said an equity injection of about £50 million would be enough to prevent the interest cover covenant being broken but Isosceles is likely to raise more than that from shareholders.

It plans a flotation in several years' time and Mr Smith said raising more equity this year would be a stepping stone in that direction. It would mean that the group would be able to float at a more manageable size.

A spokesman for SG Warburg, Isosceles's merchant

bank, stressed that the banks were pleased with the way the group was trading and that there was no pressure to restructure the business. But the group could unveil a new package in July when it announces its results for the year to April.

The next tranche of debt to be repaid is £730 million, due in August 1992. It is conceivable Isosceles could have floated by then. The interest payable on the £200 million of debt, which the group will have to pay as a result of not selling the stores, can be met from the £36 million generated annually by them.

The breakdown in negotiations came as a disappointment to Mr James Miller, chairman of Low. He does not believe the deal will be resumed. "We had an agreement to buy the stores at £212 million and we shook hands on that. The deal with CWS had to reach a certain stage before we could inform Isosceles," he said.

Low intended to finance its £150 million of the deal with a £60 million rights issue and £90 million of borrowings. Low's shares rose 12p to 302p yesterday.

But Mr David Skinner, the CWS's deputy chief executive retail and services, says he is hopeful an agreement may eventually be reached. CWS is negotiating to buy around half a dozen of Gateway's superstores separate to the deal it was pursuing with Low.

B&J in Lowndes deal

By John Bell, City Editor

BROWN & JACKSON, which bought Poundstretcher the discount retailer from Lowndes Queensway, is buying a further 53 outlets from the troubled furniture chain.

The deal was disclosed along with a sharp increase in profits mainly due to the Poundstretcher acquisition, which cost £72 million. Pre-tax profits rose 320 per cent to £9.5 million, comfortably above analysts forecasts.

Mr Bryan Duffy, Brown & Jackson's chairman, said that the increase "exceeded our most optimistic expectations." Poundstretcher's growth showed the potential

to make it "one of the outstanding retail success stories of the 90s."

The household properties are to cost £1.6 million, but B&J is making a £32 million placing of ordinary shares and convertible preference stock. The extra cash will be used to invest in the new outlets, which will increase selling space by 31 per cent, to reduce borrowings and to buy further outlets.

Poundstretcher sales were 30 per cent ahead in the first 2 months of the current year with like-for-like sales growth of 12 per cent, he said.

The fund raising takes the form of a conditional placing of 36.8 million ordinary shares at 58p, compared with

the stock market price of 61.5p, unchanged on the day, and 11 million convertible preference shares of £1 at par. The issue has been underwritten by Guidehouse Securities and UBS Phillips & Drew.

Existing shareholders can subscribe on the basis of one new ordinary share for three existing shares and one preference share for 10 currently owned. Lowndes Queensway is not taking up its rights but will vote in favour of the deal.

Earnings per share climbed more than 70 per cent to 7.22p, or 6.75p fully diluted. Total dividend rose more than 200 per cent to 1.7p per share.

Tempus, page 24

Howe amazed by Docklands



A change for the better: Michael Portillo, left, and Sir Geoffrey Howe inspect building work at Docklands

Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Deputy Prime Minister, went to Canary Wharf to see for himself how the development of London's Docklands is progressing.

Sir Geoffrey toured the Isle of Dogs Enterprise Zone with Mr Michael Portillo, Minister of State for Transport, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the announcement of Enterprise Zones.

He said he was amazed at the transformation of Docklands.

"When I announced the Enterprise Zone scheme in 1980, the Isle of Dogs was a scene of dereliction. Today, the contrast is almost beyond belief."

He was sure the whole of Docklands would be a success.

"The Enterprise Zone proved to be a

crucial spark plug for that regeneration. It attracted capital, resources and talent, unlocking an imagination and vitality which had long deserted the empty piers of the West India and Millwall Docks.

"That economic renaissance has brought new jobs, new homes and new opportunities for improving the local environment."

Dutch banks seek merger

By Neil Bennett

HOLLAND'S two largest banks, Amsterdam-Rotterdam and Algemeene Bank Nederland, are negotiating a £3 billion merger which would create Europe's seventh largest bank.

The banks stunned the Dutch financial markets yesterday by announcing they were "investigating the possibilities of a full co-operation." They then suspended their shares.

A merged bank would have total assets of Dfl352 billion

(£114 billion). This would make it the sixth largest in continental Europe, and the 20th in the world, similar in size to Credit Lyonnais in France but still smaller than Barclays or National Westminster Bank. In 1989 the banks had combined net profits of £470 million, and are valued at £3.07 billion on the Amsterdam stock exchange.

Mr Ono Ruding, Holland's former finance minister, has been named as a possible candidate to run the bank. International expansion would be one of the prime

aims of a merger. Mr Robert Hazeldoff, ABN's chairman, said: "A merger would put us among the top banks and allow us to expand rapidly."

Mr Roelof Nelissen, Amro's chairman, said: "We need a merger to achieve our aims. Partial co-operation would not be enough."

Mr Andre Mulder, a banking analyst for Barclays de Zoete Wedd in Amsterdam, welcomed the merger, saying it would combine ABN's international banking presence with Amro's strong corporate operations.

Pound up on demand from Middle East

THE POUND recovered sharply on strong commercial buying from the Middle East, closing up 0.7 in terms of the Bank of England's effective rate index at 86.8.

Shares strengthened with the currency helping the FT-SE 100 up 14.3 at 2,298.2.

Interest rates eased in the money market as sterling firmed and the three-month interbank rate finished 3/8 lower at about 15 per cent.

Markets, page 26

LUI suspended after DTI order

By Neil Bennett

SHARE dealings in London United Investments, where Prince Michael of Kent is a director, were suspended yesterday after the Department of Trade ordered the Walbrook Insurance subsidiary to stop trading.

The company was forced to cease its insurance business after an actuarial report exposed "financial uncertainties" in the company. At the suspension price of 30p a share LUI was worth just £17.4 million on stock market, against the October 1987 all-time high of 333p a share.

LUI also agreed to stop paying claims from six of its other subsidiaries, and asked the Stock Exchange to stop dealings in its shares.

The decision to stop the company underwriting was taken at an emergency board meeting on Sunday. Prince Michael, the Queen's cousin, was present.

Last Thursday, the DTI received a preliminary report on the company from Tillingshast, the consultant actuary.

This showed that some of LUI's underwriting subsidiaries might not have enough money to meet future claims. If this happens, Walbrook,

which reinsured with the other subsidiaries, would be forced drastically to scale down its own business to protect its capital. Walbrook underwrites 55 per cent of risks taken on by HS Weavers, LUI's underwriting agent.

The full review is due in two weeks, when the DTI will decide the company's future. LUI specializes in "long-tail" US liability insurance, as well as medical and legal malpractice insurance. Last year it had premium income of £123 million. It insures a large number of the US Fortune 500 companies.

In the past two years it has experienced an unprecedented surge in claims from asbestos and environmental damage. The rate of claims accelerated further in the last three months of 1989. Now Lloyd's underwriters believe the company will need a cash injection to meet its liabilities.

Prince Michael: director

Prince Michael: director

Middle East investors poised to move into sterling

Shine taken off the gold price

By Colin Campbell
Mining Correspondent

THE LONDON gold price crashed on world markets yesterday, falling at one point by \$26.75 to \$362.50 an ounce in a day which left precious metals dealers and investors shell-shocked.

Selling of gold was triggered in the Far East and compounded by reported Saudi Arabian and other Middle East bank selling of an initial 1 million ounces, and later a further 2 million ounces of gold. Middle East investors were said to be moving into sterling and would have generated up to \$1 billion for immediate conversion into sterling.

Gold closed in London at \$367.75 an ounce for a \$21.50 fall on the day and at its lowest level since October.

The shake-out knocked platinum by \$13.25 to \$482.75 an ounce, though silver showed some resilience and closed

a modest 11 cents down at \$4.96 an ounce.

Far East markets were already nervous ahead of Saturday's end of the Japanese fiscal year. The gold market was further undermined by commission house liquidation in the wake of the Tokyo Stock Exchange shake-out. Private investors were selling gold to cover equity portfolio setbacks.

The selling wave spread fast across Europe as Middle East sell orders were executed in Zurich, London, Frankfurt, and later New York. The US market opened one hour later yesterday because of British summer time, which left a market void. 10 later New York trading, gold edged up to \$368.50 an ounce.

However, investors were said to be "shell shocked" at the size and severity of a one-day fall not seen in bullion markets for some time. The shake-out is likely to frighten investors off-stage.

They had begun to think gold had found bottom around \$400 and was poised to move steadily up to the \$450 level.

Gold's weakness led to hectic volume trading on Comex as speculators unwound positions. Comex last night raised its margin requirements for speculative dealing in gold from \$1,700 per contract to \$2,100, effective today.

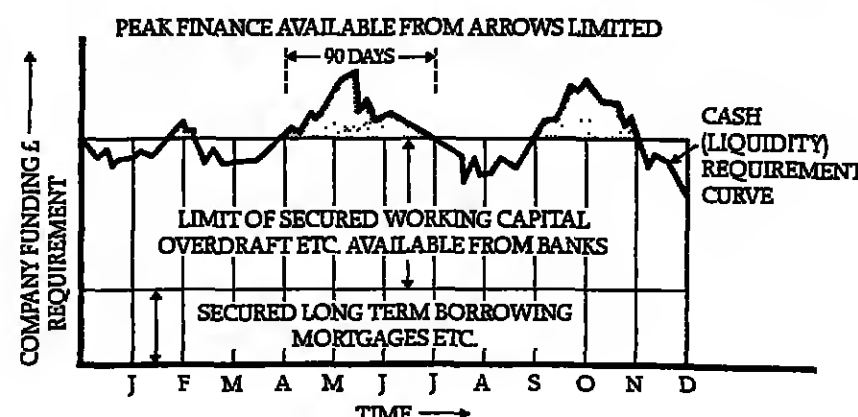
Swiss bankers last night indicated that German and Italian jewellery fabricators might be prepared to turn buyers of gold at current levels, although chartists are divided as to whether gold has further to fall. The testing area will be \$355 level - last seen in September, 1989.

James Capel, the broker, said it was to launch a new closed-end investment trust specifically to invest in gold shares and bullion. Capel aims for a fund with an asset backing of £100 million to make it a "proxy" for the now taken-over Consolidated Gold Fields group.

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BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Playboy in European joint venture talks

PLAYBOY Enterprises Inc of the US is negotiating a joint venture with an unidentified European publisher and planning a share issue, Miss Christine Heffner, Playboy's chief executive, said in Italy. She declined to comment on speculation that talks were with the West German media and publishing group Bertelsmann, but said Playboy was looking at television for growth and might consider collaborating with the Italian media entrepreneur Signor Silvio Berlusconi.

A new issue of Playboy shares on Wall Street was being considered, Miss Heffner's father, Mr Hugh Heffner, who founded Playboy magazine, owns 70 per cent of Playboy Enterprises.

Insurance broker ahead

PRE-TAX profits at Lloyd Thompson Group, the Lloyd's insurance and re-insurance broker, were ahead by 40 per cent to £4.03 million in the six months to end-December. Income from brokerage increased by 37 per cent to £9.59 million in the period. Fully diluted earnings per share improved by 32 per cent to 7.9p and the interim dividend advanced by 21 per cent to 2.3p.

Rotork lifts profit 21%

ROTORK, the manufacturer of valve actuators and other instrument-control equipment, showed a pre-tax profit of £6.15 million for 1989, an increase of 21 per cent. Turnover increased by £5.3 million to £39.37 million. A final dividend of 4.5p per ordinary share brings the total to 8p, compared with 7.25p per ordinary share for 1988. Earnings per share increased from 11.09p to 13.1p.

EBC housing setback

EBC, the South-west building contractor, sold only 40 houses in 1989 compared with 120 in 1988, halving profits at the housing division. However, buoyant profits from contracting and a doubled contribution from commercial property development helped lift pre-tax profits in the year to December to £5.3 million, a 43 per cent increase on 1988.

At £1.2 million, the contribution from the property maintenance division came close to matching the £1.3 million from contracting. A final dividend of 4.5p a share is being paid, giving a total of 8p a share (6.75p). Mr David Stoneman, the chairman, said: "Good order books for a number of our building companies make us confident about the prospects for the current year."

Mayoh leaves P-E payout Epwin Group rises 24%

MR JOHN MAYOH, joint managing director of Epwin Group, the window maker, has resigned to pursue other interests. He has undertaken not to sell his 18 per cent stake for at least a year. Epwin raised pre-tax profits 32 per cent to £3.05 million during 1989 on turnover of £43.9 million (£34.8 million). The total dividend rises to 6p (5.3p) through a proposed final of 4.2p on earnings of 14.1p (11.3p).

Sale boosts Ossory

THE SALE of an 11-acre site in Mortlake, south-west London, accounts for much of the turnover in the interim results from Ossory Estates, the property developer. The site was sold in December for £20 million to investors trading as 'Peachstream Properties'. The sale fell within Ossory's first half and lifted total turnover in the six months to December to £27.3 million. Pre-tax profits were up 49 per cent at £6.58 million despite a doubled interest charge of £1.3 million. Ossory has since acquired a 47.5 per cent stake in Peachstream, which plans a 184,000 sq ft office building on the site. Ossory will project manage the scheme on a fee basis. An interim dividend of 0.4p a share (0.3p) is being paid.

Discount winner transforms B&J

ALISTAIR GRANT

TWO SUBSTANTIAL equity offerings in just over a year are rich even for a fast-growing company like Brown & Jackson. Such hyperactivity is bound to raise memories of B&J's last spell of torrid growth, when the shares reached a dizzy 288p before sagging to 11p.

That said, B&J looks to have a winner with Poundstretch, the discount non-food retail chain bought from Lowndes Queensway. Management style is to pile it high and sell it cheap. There is mileage in selling men's white cotton shirts at £3.99. If Poundstretch proves to be a formula business with staying power, then the original purchase was indeed a great opportunity, and the latest deal to add a further 53 Lowndes stores is a logical extension.

Poundstretch turned in 13 per cent like-for-like sales growth, which translates to 25 per cent profits growth. The first months of the current year show a distinct acceleration.

The deal stretched B&J's balance sheet, but transformed its profitability. At pre-tax level, the gain was 320 per cent to £9.53 million with earnings per share 70 per cent ahead. Regrettably, the fact that £2 million of the profits arose from property disposals was not apparent immediately, though the company would say that with more than 200 outlets, this will be a recurring

source of income. Dividends rose 200 per cent to 1.7p.

B&J is paying £1.6 million for the 10- to 15-year leasehold properties from Lowndes yet is raising £32 million from a placing of straight shares and convertible preference stock. The all-in cost of refurbishing the new outlets and re-stocking is more like £12 million. That leaves headroom for bank debt reduction and a modest war chest for further site acquisitions.

The size of the issue takes a good deal on trust. But it is effectively placed with a claw-back provision for existing shareholders, thus denying current holders a chance to sell their rights. The shares are being offered at a modest 58p, representing about 9 times earnings after allowing for full dilution and some property profits. Speculative, but interesting.

Brent

Chemicals

THE BIG question for Brent Chemicals shareholders lies in the group's plans for spending its considerable cash hoard.

The sale of Reddish Savilles, the brewing and cleaning chemicals subsidiary, plus the divestment of its automotive rust treatment and primer activities, brought in more than £30 million, a tidy sum for a company capitalized at little more than £75 million.



Eyes on Europe: Steve Cathbert, of Brent Chemicals, yesterday

Indeed, £29 million of Brent's £41 million net assets are net cash, which works out at about \$4p per share.

Brent clearly plans to make further acquisitions and hints that these will be of owner-managed businesses in Europe, where its expansion is to be focused. However, there is a risk it will make a rash move to reduce its current acute vulnerability to predators.

Any purchases are likely to be aimed at boosting interests in aerospace and electronics chemicals. These businesses are already much more international than the ones just sold, where sales were mainly in the UK.

The latest figures reported by Mr Steve Cathbert, the chief executive, were not particularly impressive, nor any great surprise. Although

pre-tax profits were 15 per cent up at £12.9 million in the year to December, the first full dividend on the £12 million of preference shares issued in August 1988 left earnings per share just 2 per cent up at 13.1p.

Earnings had grown only 2 per cent in the first half and the full-year totals were only slightly higher than Brent forecast earlier this month, when it announced the disposal of Reddish Savilles.

Analysts expect some recovery in Brent's fortunes this year, taking profits to £14 million and earnings to about 14p and leaving the shares, up 4p at 144p, on a prospective p/e ratio of 10. That is high on trading grounds, even though there is a 6.3 per cent yield. However, Brent has a number of businesses of gem-like quality and, netting the cash pile off its market value, these could seem sufficiently cheap for an industry buyer to launch a bid.

TT Group

TT GROUP is fast settling into its stride, which is no less than was expected after a 1987 revitalization in which Mr John Newman, former acquisitions manager at Hanson, and Mr Nicholas Shipp, former stockbroker, moved into the executive seats.

Pre-tax profits of TT (formerly Tyack Turner) rose by 135 per cent from £3.58

million to £5.42 million on a £60.9 million (£28 million) turnover in the year ended December 30. Pre-tax margins advanced by one percentage point to 13.8 per cent.

The final dividend rises from 2p to 2.5p a share, making 4p (3p) for the year.

The profits advance owes something to a full year's contribution from Beatson Clark, acquired in August, 1988, the benefit of eight months' profit after the May, 1989, acquisition of Newship Manufacturing, and to organic growth.

Improved productivity was squeezed out of Beatson.

The Hanson experience and lessons of financial control helped TT Group end the year with gross bank borrowings of £3.3 million and cash in hand of £1.7 million, giving a gearing of a mere 4.4 per cent.

The balance sheet is therefore poised for the next move on the acquisition trail, though not, it seems, Chloride's way. Having built a 2.85 per cent stake in Chloride, TT has recently sold the rump of its holding. However, after interest costs, TT may not have made much of a turn out of the exercise.

Pre-tax profits could challenge the £11 million mark this year, and at 117p up 4p, the shares trade on 8.1 times.

The Newman-Shipp team holds 32 per cent of TT's equity, and there is a respectable institutional following. The shares are looking cheap.

Japanese firms favour UK

JAPANESE companies have increased their presence in Europe ahead of the single market in 1992 with Britain and France the favoured destinations, a survey by Jetro, the semi-official Japan External Trade Organisation shows.

At end-January, there were 529 companies with Japanese investment of at least 10 per cent, up from 411 a year earlier, in the 18 countries of the EC and the European Free Trade Association.

These included 132 in Britain, 95 in France, 89 in West Germany, 55 in Spain, 39 in the Netherlands and 28 in Italy. By sector, 139 produce electronic and electrical equipment or parts, 83 chemicals and 66 general machinery. The average local content of parts and materials rose from 51.2 to 67.2 per cent.

Legal wrangles risk souring economic ties, says Brittan

EC trade treaty with US urged

From Peter Guilford

Brussels

The United States and the European Community need a joint treaty to prevent "unseemly and damaging disputes" over industrial jurisdiction from escalating out of proportion, Sir Leon Brittan, EC Commissioner for Competition Policy, said in New York yesterday.

Sir Leon defended the EC's increasingly powerful competition-enforcement rules, but gave warning that they could bring it into conflict with the US. "We cannot avoid the possibility of conflicts of jurisdiction, with both the United States and the European Community claiming jurisdiction in the same areas," he said.

The world's two biggest trading blocs should sign "a



Sir Leon: 'Interests overlap'

treaty or less formal agreement", as no procedure currently exists for settling disputes between them, he continued. Such an agreement would provide for information gathering and exchange,

and would set a framework for consultation, in order to prevent the growing number of legal wrangles that risk souring economic ties.

The move could help allay fears that Brussels will use its growing anti-trust muscle beyond Community boundaries to protect European interests.

Sir Leon's spokesman in Brussels said that newly agreed EC powers to control large-scale company mergers, which come into force on September 21, gave added urgency to the Commission's treaty plans.

"Many mergers of American and other international companies will come under the new EC regulation, and there is clearly bound to be a certain overlap of interest between the Community and the United States," he said.

A treaty could clarify where global company link-ups stand vis-à-vis EC and American law, and could establish how far EC decisions might have repercussions beyond Community frontiers, and vice-versa. America was jolted by a European Court of Justice ruling last year which confirmed Brussels had the right to confiscate assets of non-EC companies if they were found to be involved in price cartels on the European market.

Speaking to the EC Chamber of Commerce in New York, Sir Leon admitted that an arbitration clause would meet formidable political obstacles. He was looking for a first nod of approval from the American authorities, but he vowed to pursue his plans irrespective of how they were initially received.

Clearing time cut by Abbey

By Lindsay Cook

Family Money Editor

ABBEY NATIONAL has taken another step towards becoming a fully fledged clearing bank. It has reduced the time it takes to clear cheques from seven calendar days to four working days for its two cheque accounts. The high street banks quote three to four days to clear cheques and advise customers not to write cheques until they have balances to cover them.

Under the new system, a cheque paid into an Abbey branch on a Monday will be available on Friday.

The Abbey, which suffered substantial losses through a student cheque fraud in the Eighties, had maintained its seven-day clearing when it launched its cheque accounts two years ago.

GrandMet seeks new retail business for franchising side

From Martin Waller, Farmington, Connecticut

GRAND METROPOLITAN is seeking a new retail business to add to its franchise-based operations, which include the Burger King hamburger chain.

However, the drinks group — showing a party of London analysts round its US businesses this week — is keen not to be seen as being in acquisition mode.

It has stressed that any retail expansion would not involve a massive cash outlay — it may even choose to start a new business from scratch.

The company also stressed its commitment to Pearl, its spectacles retail business in the US, which has been seen in some quarters as sitting oddly

with GrandMet's core activities. Some analysts have suggested it might be sold.

Mr David Tagg, the main board director in charge of retail and property, said there was no question of selling or floating Pearl, which expects to double sales from a forecast \$750 million in 1990 over the next three years.

He said the intention was to build the retail side further by bolting on another retail area which would be run along the same franchise lines as Burger King and Pearl. Mr Tagg said the new retail area could well be just as different as spectacles and burgers.

The spectacles business will

need another \$300 million to \$450 million in annual sales, or between 200 and 300 stores, before it reaches the necessary critical mass in the US market over the next four or five years.

Bul Pearl is keen to expand into Europe. It has a toehold in the Netherlands and will open its first store in West Germany soon. Britain has been ruled out because of the retail slump which coincided with a downturn in spectacles sales after the Government withdrew free sight-testing last year. The first store in Taiwan is likely to open later this year. Asia and the Chinese market are seen as priorities.

Ramar Textiles plc

MANUFACTURERS AND DISTRIBUTORS OF LADIESWEAR

Unaudited Interim Results

	Half year to 24/11/89	Half year to 25/11/88	Year to 26/5/89
Turnover	12,085	13,768	24,682
Profit (Loss) before tax	(252)	426	837
Tax (Charge) credit	88	(157)	(323)
Profit (Loss) after tax	(164)	269	514
Earnings (Loss) per share	(1.29p)	2.12p	4.06p

- Company carrying record stockholdings of presold stock. UK factories producing at record levels with order books full through into the Autumn.
- Presold production running at a rate of £600,000 per week since the beginning of 1990. A sales increase in the order of 20% anticipated for calendar year.
- High interest rates, delay in settlement of consequential loss claim, expanding production & high stock levels all contributed to interest charges in excess of £525,000.
- Supply difficulties and uncertainties in China resulted in lost sales of around £2 million in silk garments in the first half. However, these problems have been overcome and as silk now has a much wider public appeal I anticipate a long term investment will create profits in the ensuing years.
- I am confident of the satisfactory outcome of arbitration at the end of April and very much regret the detrimental effect on the recovery and expansion of the Group caused by unwarranted delays in settlement by the insurers.

Colin Radin, Chairman

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'No changes' at Wang after founder's death

By Melinda Wittstock

WALL STREET has ruled out any changes in the management or ownership of Wang Laboratories, the loss-making US minicomputer manufacturer whose founder, Dr An Wang, aged 70, died on Sunday.

It was reportedly "business as usual" at the company in Lowell, Massachusetts, with no signs of the boardroom struggle that, more often than not, follows the death of a family-controlled company's founder.

Wall Street analysts and corporate financiers said there is little likelihood that Wang, which reported a \$424.3 million loss on sales of \$2.87

billion in the year to end-June, will be taken over for some time.

Mr Marc Schulman, a computer industry analyst with UBS Securities in New York, said: "No one is interested. It's like climbing into a ship with a hole in the bottom. When that has finally been plugged, maybe someone will be interested."

Mr George Elling, a computer industry analyst with Merrill Lynch in New York, said: "Even if the family did decide it wanted to sell out, it is highly questionable who would want to buy it now."

With the shares languishing at just \$6 yesterday, down

from a \$42.50 high in 1984, it is highly unlikely the Wang family could be persuaded to sell out.

Mr Frederick Wang, who resigned as president and chief operating officer to make way last August for Mr Richard Miller, a former executive of General Electric, confirmed that the family will continue to back Mr Miller's restructuring programme while maintaining its controlling stake.

The Wang family, together with directors and top managers, controls 82.8 per cent of the company's publicly-quoted Class C voting stock and 22.9 per cent of the quoted non-voting Class B

shares. In a statement, Mr Wang said: "The Wang family believes the long-term plan now being implemented to return the company to profitability will achieve its objectives, and that implementation of the plan remains the best means through which to maximize stockholders' value in the company."

Wang, which pioneered electronic calculators, user-friendly word processors and small business computers, first ran into trouble when it chose to ignore the arrival of the IBM personal computer.

It has been hit by the worldwide slump in computer sales.

CCF in talks on funds manager

By Jeremy Andrews

CRÉDIT COMMERCIAL de France, the country's ninth largest bank, is in negotiations with Throgmorton Trust about buying Framlington, Throgmorton's fund-management subsidiary.

However, Mr Anthony Greayer, CCF's chief executive in Britain, denied that his bank's interest was connected with the rows at Framlington which have led to a number of resignations in recent months.

Although CCF has an extensive branch network in France and 30 other countries, half the bank's profits come from its investment banking and fund-management businesses. It has \$13 billion under management, most of which is money market funds within Europe.

A fortnight ago, it announced its intention to acquire a fund manager in London to form the nucleus of an international fund-management operation.

Framlington was set up 21 years ago to manage unit trusts by Laurence Prust, the stockbroker, who floated it on the stock market in 1983. Laurence Prust's institutional broking business was acquired by CCF in 1985 and the private client business was merged with Framlington in return for a 28.8 per cent stake.

Meanwhile, Throgmorton Trust, an investment trust, had acquired a 15 per cent holding in Framlington in return for its fund-management side.

After the stock market crash, Throgmorton launched a £70 million bid for Framlington on the back of the two stakes.

Although successful, the bid was acrimonious and was followed by the departure of several senior figures at Framlington.

Mr Greayer emphasized that CCF was in discussions with possible vendors of a number of fund-management groups.

In November, Framlington had more than £2.4 billion under management. Throgmorton's latest accounts show Framlington made profits of £6.07 million before tax in the 12 months to November, compared to £6.47 million in the previous 17 months. Mr Paul Leach, the managing director, said annual fees had risen by 44 per cent since June 1987, compared with a 26 per cent rise in gross revenues.

COMMENT

A princely penny for Laing's revaluation

The sparkling property revaluation from Laing Properties at the tail end of last week brought a pretty humble response in the stock market at the start of the new account yesterday. In theory, this is the account when Pail Mall, the joint Peninsular & Oriental/Chelsfield bid vehicle, is most likely to raise its takeover offer. Last week, Laing produced a revaluation of 910p a share, with a further development surplus, if all goes according to plan, of 73p a share.

Yet the Laing Properties' share price slumped all the way down from 683p to 651p, a princely penny above the 650p-a-share cash offer from Pail Mall. The movement gave off two conflicting signals: either that the bid will fail and that the 651p reached last night is merely a staging post in the shares' journey back to the 450p they might command without a bid at all, or that the offer will succeed after a slight raising of the price. But there is another, clearer, signal in that property valuations produced in the middle of bid battles are given limited credibility by the market.

In the case of Laing Properties, the weak spot is the United States portfolio. Nearly 30 per cent of the portfolio value is locked up in the US, nearly all of that in developments under way and in sites. US developments are valued at £120 million, but require a further £104 million to complete and let them. According to the valuers, the aggregate value of those developments when completed would be £156 million, or £68 million less than the current value.

Sydney needs a real remedy

Down Under, there is a dark spirit substitute called Claytons marketed by luminaries such as Paul Hogan as "the drink you have when you're not having a drink". The term was extended to the political arena at the weekend when Australia had a Claytons election. There was a vote but no outcome and the tip is that there will either be a hung parliament or a return of the Labor Government led by Prime Minister Bob Hawke with a majority of two seats. Political survival will depend on Labor MPs refusing to die and resisting the temptation to resign.

Whatever the outcome, such a slim margin for error is bad news for Australia's already battered share market. Foreign investors, who re-embraced bluechip Aussie shares in the New Year, look stuck for a while and uncertainty will not encourage more investment. Aggressive and constructive change in economic policy will take a back seat as both sides jockey for position, and economists will continue to say Australia is a nation with first-world living standards based on a third-world trade profile.

Both the Labor Party and the

conservative Liberal Party have said they want to see interest rates of almost 20 per cent fall soon and that is bad news for the Australian dollar, which already has tumbled half a cent to US74.5 cents since polling day.

Longer term, a lower dollar — at least 10 per cent lower — is good news for the country's resources companies, which will produce higher profits after the currency translation. Indeed, base-metal companies such as BHP, CRA and Renison Goldfields are the true drinks in a parched market. Buoyant demand, aided for example by the needs of Eastern Europe, should see to that even though gold stocks will be hit by the precious metal's US\$60 fall over the past month.

Australia's key market indicator, the All Ordinaries Index, eased 7 points to 1,567.4 on Monday based on paltry turnover of Aus\$90 million. Investors are walking on eggshells in what was already a subdued market. To inspire confidence offshore Australia must junk the Claytons and bring out the real medicine.

David Brewerton

Head of airline resigns

THE HEAD of London City Airways, Mr Jonathan Wilson, has resigned after mounting losses forced the hand-over of a main route to this fledgling airline's arch-rival, Brymon.

Mr Wilson helped to develop three scheduled services from London City Airport and during recent months saw a steady improvement in the number of passengers carried to both Paris and Brussels.

Flights to Amsterdam, however, proved difficult to fill

Parkland fall
SHARES IN Parkland Textiles of Bradford dropped 25p to 215p after a warning that profits would slump by about 20 per cent this year.

Memec lower
MEMEC, THE systems components group, saw pre-tax profits tumble by a fifth to £6.7 million in 1989. The total dividend rises to 6p (5.2p) on earnings per share of 15.85p (19.9p).

Ramar loss
RAMAR TEXTILES plunged to a loss of £164,000 at the interim stage to November compared with pre-tax profits of £426,000 last time. Again there is no interim dividend on a loss per share of 1.29p (cps 2.12p).

Minorco wins
MINORCO HAS secured 98 per cent of Freeport-McMoRan Gold of the US following its offer.



Peter Tom: reporting a difficult year, but confident about future progress

Bardon produces £12m

BARDON GROUP, the quarrying and building products group, reports pre-tax profits of £12.1 million on sales of £98.5 million in the nine months to the end of December, against £12.9 million for the year to end-March 1989, on turnover of £165.7 million (Philip Pangalos writes).

Earnings per share of 10.14p for the period compare with 10.1p for the previous year, with fully diluted earnings at 9.64p (9.86p) reflecting September's £16 million rights issue. A final dividend of 1.9p, makes 2.86p for the nine months, compared with 3.18p for the year to end-March. Mr

Peter Tom, the chairman, said conditions had been difficult on both sides of the Atlantic, stemming from high British interest rates, increased raw material costs and the economic uncertainty in Massachusetts. But he remained confident about medium-to-long-term progress.

British turnover was 85 per cent of that in the previous year, with profits reaching 98 per cent.

Mr Tom said the market for quarry materials was particularly tight. Profit margins at the building products division, which had static turnover, were reduced due to a

shortfall in the concrete company, affected by rising cement prices and lower demand.

Mr Tom said the American operations, which account for 28 per cent of group profits and 47 per cent of turnover, produced lower results than expected due to adverse climatic and economic conditions.

Interest costs were reduced from £5.37 million to £3.75 million, with gearing down from 129 per cent to 59 per cent. Analysts are looking for pre-tax profits of £13.5 million for 1990. The shares firmed by 1p to 162p.

Panfida blames high rates for loss

By Our City Staff

PANFIDA, the Australian-controlled retail and property company that operates the 850-strong Martins chain of newsagent and convenience stores in Britain, has fallen into a £7.1 million pre-tax loss for the six months to end-December.

The company blamed the loss — down from last year's £561,000 interim pre-tax profit — on high British interest rates and the resulting downturn in consumer spending.

Panfida paid £13.5 million

interest during the period, on borrowings down from £245 million last June to a current £200 million, while the Martin Retail Group (MRG) reported an after-tax loss of £2.67 million.

The company reported a loss per share of 8.3p compared with earnings per share of 4.2p last time. There is no interim dividend payout to shareholders, who received 0.5p last time.

Panfida also announced it had granted Meldew, the pri-

vate Australian property company, an option to buy its 35 per cent stake in CRI, an Australian property development and management business, for Aus\$25 million (£12 million) before June 30.

The proposed sale of the CRI stake, as well as the planned sale of TOC Retail, Panfida's US convenience store chain, is expected to cut borrowings by more than half.

The company reported an extraordinary net gain of £12.7 million, mainly as a

result of the recent sale of Munford, its other US convenience store chain. Last month, Panfida paid £8.2 million for the 47 per cent of MRG it did not already own.

As part of the same deal, it is raising £10 million through the sale of up to 31.3 per cent of its shares to News International, the publisher of *The Times*, at 35p a share. News International will have voting rights on 29.9 per cent of the shares.

Panfida fell 4p to 16p.

ConsGold and the snakepit

RTZ AND Minorco would have been the joint bidders for British mining house Consolidated Gold Fields in the summer of 1986 had a takeover and break-up plan, conceived by American investment bank Merrill Lynch, materialized. A book by Bill Jamieson, a City journalist, to be published by Hutchinson Business Books on April 5, on the battle for ConsGold — *Goldstrike: The Oppenheimer Empire in Crisis* — reveals that the code name used by RTZ and Minorco for the scheme was "Operation Snakepit". Because each would take various parts of ConsGold once "the victim was in the pit", the RTZ-Minorco plan came to naught, and eventually Minorco took on ConsGold in its own right only to lose out to Hanson. The original plan was that RTZ would have taken the aggregates business, ARC, since it was not interested in sitting on minority shareholdings with no cash flow. One other interesting bit of snakepit, also revealed in *Goldstrike*, is a description of Rudolph Agnew, ConsGold's chairman, who regularly sought relaxation by taking his Labrador dog, Augusta, for long walks. Concluding that Augusta must have become a very wise dog indeed during the course of Britain's biggest takeover, Jamieson quotes Agnew as saying: "I tell Augusta everything. We have long discussions. The Takeover Panel would not at all approve."

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

On a good day . . .

RUGBY-PLAYING Tony O'Reilly, the chairman of Heinz, has become a legend in his own lifetime in Irish sporting circles. Tales about him abound. An informant, hot-foot from Saturday's international match in Dublin, tells me that he overheard talk of the time O'Reilly visited the headmaster of Clongowood, a fine boarding school a few miles west of the Irish capital.

ICI outsider
FOR THE first time in 43 years, ICI has appointed a finance director from outside the firm. Colin Short, aged 56, a long-time oilman, has been poached from Chevron, where he has been the company treasurer based in San Fran-



"Who's taking the mikkei?"

isco. Before that Short, born in Carmarthen, was a key member of the defence team which saw off a T Boone Pickens takeover bid for Gulf Oil in 1983, where Short was chief financial officer. The friendly merger between Gulf and Chevron came later. Moving to London in June, Short will take over from Alan Clements when he reaches retirement age at the end of the year.

Egg on
AT THE birthday party for the 1,000th issue of James Capel's *Mining Review* yesterday, one fund manager who should perhaps remain nameless gave Julian Baring, the firm's gold guru, a Cadbury's Creme Egg. My man on the scene wanted to know: "Why such a small Easter egg?" "Because it is all mushy inside — just like some of the recommendations that Julian has given us down the years," quipped the jovial client.

Sunken dreams

BRITAIN'S highest-paid businessman, property developer Paul Sykes — he pays himself £6 million a year — may yet rue the day that he bought his North Yorkshire home from Neil Balfour, chairman of York Trust, the quoted financial services group. Sykes bought the Studley Royal stables, complete with country mansion and situated in the deer park at Fountains Abbey — the National Trust site which also houses the ruins of what was once Britain's foremost Cistercian abbey — for £1 million. Now he is spending an equally large sum renovating the property before moving in. But his desire to create a sunken garden next to the stables has run up against a problem — in the form of Harrogate Borough Council, which will consider his application on April 10. According to local sources, the signs are not good. An archaeological dig on the site ear-marked for the sunken garden is unearthing important remains, not least those of a 15th century village and the old road from Ripon to Pateley Bridge. All this must be decidedly tiresome for Sykes whose reputation for achieving things in a hurry has earned him the nickname "Powerhouse Paul." And, ironically, it is he who is footing the bill for the £20,000 10-week excavation.

● NOW we know. A notice on a truck in London's Marylebone Road at the weekend announced: "This is the lorry it all fell off of."

Carol Leonard

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Investors still wary despite Nikkei rally

From Joe Joseph, Tokyo

JAPAN'S financial markets continued to taunt monetary officials and baffle investors as the yen sank to its lowest level in more than three years, and share prices, catching their breath after their recent slide, climbed nearly 1,500 points in the stock market's second biggest rally.

The dollar climbed ¥1.33 to ¥156.4, its highest point for 36 months, driven by the failure of the weekend talks in Los Angeles between US and Japanese finance ministers to convince dealers that a miracle cure had been found for Japan's headaches.

Dealers are wary of reading much into the Nikkei stock index's 1,468.33-point rise yesterday to 31,940.49, and there is no strong feeling that the market's plunge is over, even if few expect dramatic further falls from the currently depressed levels.

The hastily called talks between Mr Ryutaro Hashimoto, Japan's Finance Minister,

and Mr Nicholas Brady, the American Treasury Secretary, failed to produce any hint that the US was unhappy with a muscular dollar, or to warn speculators not to treat the yen as a one-way bet. This served to convince currency markets that Tokyo was being left to struggle alone.

The limp, two-paragraph communiqué that finally emerged further pulled the rug from under Mr Hashimoto, who was hoping to return to Tokyo boasting of a new international accord.

The yen now looks likely to remain the favourite whipping boy of world currency markets. Many dealers predict a slide to ¥160 to the dollar as speculators test the resolve of the Bank of Japan to raise interest rates again.

The dilemma is that the higher borrowing costs needed to stabilize the yen could knock investors' confidence in the stock market just when it may be about to calm down.

COMPANY BRIEFS

BPP HOLDINGS (Fin)
Pre-tax: £3.23m (£1.70m)
EPS: 13.5p (10.8p)
Div: 3.2p, mkg 5.25p

BEDFORD (WILLIAM) (Fin)
Pre-tax: £0.25m (£0.23m)
EPS: 3.3p (4.2p)
Div: 1p, mkg 1p (1p)

BOSTROM (Fin)
Pre-tax: £2.30m (£2.12m)
EPS: 24.1p (19.2p)
Div: 3.5p, mkg 5.75p

COMPUTER PEOPLE (Fin)
Pre-tax: £4.22m (£3.23m)
EPS: 21.80p (17.84p)
Div: 4.1p, mkg 5.85p

SYKES-PICKAVANT (Fin)
Pre-tax: £1.58m (£1.72m)
EPS: 10.96p (12.86p)
Div: 3.5p, mkg 5.75p

TECHNOLOGY PROJECT
Pre-tax: £1.71m (£1.18m)
EPS: 23.2p (16.0p)
Div: 5p, mkg 7.2p (5p)

Last year's total dividend was 4.2p. Company said that every part of the business produced record sales and profits. Turnover £21.1m (£10.2m).

Turnover £3.04m (£2.72m). Lower margins led to the fall in profit. Turnover for first two months of current year down 52 per cent.

Total dividend is an increase of 13 per cent over total which board would have recommended in 1988 if enlarged capital had been in issue.

Last year's total dividend was 4.85p. Turnover advanced by 49 per cent to £69.9 million. It was another year of strong organic growth in Britain.

Last year's total dividend was 5.75p. There was an extraordinary charge of £485,000, relating to relocation of the Vitrex DIY business.

Final results. Board says the management will continue to exercise careful cost controls.

Turnover up 29.6 per cent to £14.1m.

Stronger sterling gives boost to equity prices

PRICES STARTED the account on a firm note cheered by a stronger pound and futures-related buying of the FT-SE 100 index.

The Chancellor's encouraging comments about interest rates over the weekend and Tokyo's second biggest one-day gain ever boosted sentiment. The equity market was squeezed higher in thin trading, which saw only 353 million shares dealt in. The index was 23 points up before closing at 2,298.2. The FT index of 30 shares rose 17.4 to 1,813.5.

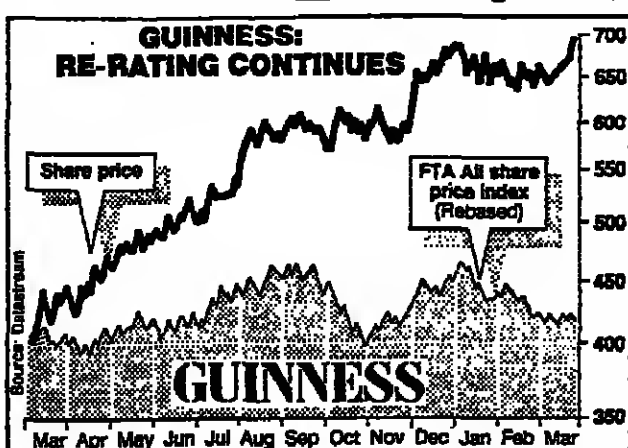
The FT-SE futures contract tempted a few buyers at lower levels to test conditions. It was trading at a small premium ahead of the expiry of the March contract on Friday.

A firmer pound eased pressure on interest rates and enabled government securities to sport gains stretching to 1 1/4 at the longer end.

Blue chips with figures due soon attracted selective support. Laccas Industries rose 7p to 62 1/2p, Bowater 10p to 45 1/2p, Polysar 7p to 40 1/2p and Hawker Siddeley 4p to 65 1/2p.

Guinness, the brewing and distilling group, continued to make the most of last week's full-year results which exceeded even the most optimistic forecasts with pre-tax profits soaring from £521 million to £691 million. The shares rose 8p to a peak of 69 1/2p as their re-rating continued.

Analysts have been raising their profit estimates for the current year. Barclays de Zoete Wedd has lifted its to £832 million and is also predicting £1 billion in 1991.



It says the annual earnings growth of more than 20 per cent means that the shares should continue to outperform the rest of the market. GEC managed to shrug off another profits downgrade to finish 3p better at 208p. County NatWest WoodMac, the broker, has trimmed its estimate for the current year by £25 million to £885 million. Last year, the group made £797 million. County is

135p. It is in talks which could lead to an offer. Jameel, the Saudi Arabian group, failed recently to win control of the Ford and Rover dealer Harwell, unchanged at 158p. Shares in Equity & General, a rival motor trader, were suspended at 20p. Talks are underway which may have a "significant impact" on the group which said last month that it was looking for a buyer for its financial services di-

MEPC ROSE 4p to 490p, helped by a buy recommendation from Charterhouse Tilney, the broker. Worries about its big City development programme should be offset by good news from the company and the knowledge that the 51 per cent discount between the share price and the asset value allows for a significant fall which is unlikely to materialize. The broker is forecasting a rise in pre-tax profits this year of £22.5 million to £150 million.

the latest of a number of private. ICS Investments, a private company, has increased its holding in Equity & General to 2.9 million shares, or 10.56 per cent.

Hopes of a higher offer appear to be fading at Laing Properties where the price tumbled 32p to 65 1/2p following last week's bigger-than-

expected asset revaluation. The eventual figure of 910p a share was well above most predictions of 825p and seems to make an increased bid from P&O and the private property company, Chelsfield, less likely. P&O rose 10p to 61 1/2p.

Blacks Leisure, the sports-wear retailer, jumped 12p to 72p in a thin market. Dealers say that sales of its prestigious LA Gear sportswear range for which it has the franchise in this country are head of budget and that further good news on the trading front is expected. The price has now risen 30p in the past 10 days following a fall of similar proportions last month.

Shares of London United, the insurance group, were frozen at 30p after the company announced its subsidiaries had suspended underwriting activities and had even halted payment of claims because of "financial uncertainties." The Department of Trade and Industry has also moved to stop its Walbrook subsidiary taking on new insurance business. The news failed to affect the rest of the sector with rises seen in General Accident, 18p to £10.79, Guardian Royal Exchange, 8p to 233p, Royal Insurance, 15p to 498p and Sun Alliance, 3p to 256p.

William Low, the supermarket chain, rose 12p to 302p, after announcing that talks with Iscoses, the Gateway supermarket chain, to buy some of its northern stores had broken down. Low had linked-up with the Co-operative Wholesale Society to buy 81 of the stores.

Michael Clark

Tokyo aids recovery in Sydney

Sydney (Reuters) — The second highest one-day gain in Tokyo helped the market to recover from a weaker start because of nervousness about the outcome of Saturday's federal election.

Shares closed steady on thin volume with the All-Ordinaries index unchanged at 1,567.4 after falling to a low of 1,557.3.

The All-Industries index climbed 8 points after Tokyo's surge to end at 2,396.0, while the All-Resources dropped 5.3 to 930.4 and the gold market tumbled 50.4 to 1,705.9.

One broker said: "There's not a lot of interest in the market. The uncertain election result had little impact overall, with most expecting the Hawke government to be returned."

The slight fall in the Australian dollar early in the day — also an uncertainty about the election result — had little effect on the share market.

Another broker said: "If the dollar continues to fall, we should see a fairly bullish market."

RECENT ISSUES

EQUITIES				
ABI Leisure (125p)	118-2			
Adas Group (14p)	91-1			
Austral New (100p)	85-4			
Austral Thal (100p)	20-1			
Anglo Suez (100p)	82			
Burness (100p)	86			
Cable Int (100p)	86			
Chelton (100p)	86			
Citybond	215			
Courtside Textiles	281-4			
Deutsche Gp (100p)	48			
Eurochem	355-5			
F&G German	138-4			
First Island (100p)	93-1			
Germano Energy Pacific	57			
Goldsmith	127-1			
Heathrow (100p)	89			
Lon & New York (100p)	89			
Mira Currie Euro (100p)	43			
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Sutton Water	135			
Ti High Inc (500p)	105			
Torrey & Carter (150p)	158-2			
Wicklow Brew (70p)	68			

See main listing for Water shares

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(Issue price in brackets)

THE TIMES STOCK WATCH

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WALL STREET

Dow climbs 22 points

New York (Reuters) — The Dow Jones industrial average was ahead by 22 points to 2,726.28 in early trading. Shares generally responded to the overnight rally in Tokyo. Futures-related buying helped the cash market to gain.

The nearby MMI contract opened at a sharp premium to cash stocks, leading to buying of underlying issues, most of which are in the Dow average.

● Hang Kong — The Hang

Seng index closed 39.86 up at 3,014.02. The broader-based Hong Kong index advanced 25.79 to 1,978.17. The market

ramped up to the highest point seen since the crash-down on June 4 in China.

● Singapore — The Straits Times industrial index jumped 18.66 to an all-time high of 1,604.08.

● Frankfurt — The DAX index ended 7.41 higher at 1,939.53.

● London — The FT-SE 100 index rose 23 points to 2,298.2.

● Tokyo — The Nikkei index rose 1,468 points to 31,940.49.

● Osaka — The Osaka index rose 1,468 points to 31,940.49.

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BUSINESS LETTERS

Questions left unasked

From Mr S. D. Lewis
Sir, I was simply astonished to read your article concerning the Blue Arrow payouts made to former directors of the National Westminster Bank who failed to "carry out the real responsibility for the lawful conduct of business at the bank".

This on top of glib announcements by that Bank and other clearing banks of massive losses over loans to third world countries and the offer of an extravagantly remunerated part time job by Barclays Bank to a former Chancellor of the Exchequer who totally misjudged government policy in his 1988 Budget.

All this, yet nobody says a word. Small wonder we have runaway inflation and are teetering on the brink of recession.

If, as a Chartered Accountant, I failed to carry out my lawful responsibility I would probably find myself fighting an action in the High Court for damages.

Why are the clearing bank shareholders not asking some questions? Why is the press not calling for explanations?

Yours faithfully,
S. D. LEWIS,
Central Buildings,
41 North John Street,
Liverpool.

CBI members at root of speculative disease

From Mr A. G. Biggart
Sir, On March 12, Pembroke announced its first disposal since it won control of DRG - that is to say, the break-up of another world-competitive British company began.

Small wonder that John Banham, Director-General of the CBI, felt constrained, at the end of his article vigorously defending British industry (*The Times*, March 15) to state the need for the right policies to encourage ownership rather than speculation. What he did not say - how could he? - was that the cause of the speculative disease lies

in part in the activities of his own members.

They have encouraged the growth of a new profession - "Investor Relations" - which, at great cost to corporate Britain, works to integrate the UK Chief Executive into the City Establishment. Once in, he quite quickly develops a taste for dealing - sell this, buy that - destroying in this way the stability required within a business for organic growth to take place. The speculation is compounded with the realisation that the biter can be bit and the predator become the prey;

then under the label of "retaining our independence" the internal asset strip of the business begins.

Our German and Japanese competitors do not seem to need this sort of excitement. They have patience enough to sustain long-term endeavours, and they work quietly with their own politicians to ensure that, ultimately, their industries will reap the rewards. Yours faithfully,
A. G. BIGGART,
The Admirals,
St Briavels,
Lydney, Glos.
March 21.

Share certificates

From Mr K. P. Dawes
Sir, In an article by you in *The Times* of March 10, Mr Hugh Smith was reported as having said that it was not true that private investors valued share certificates highly and that they found the torrent of paper work a major disincentive to investment.

I am a private investor and I and my friends do value share certificates most highly and I don't think one share certificate can be called "a torrent of paper work".

If one pays out quite a large sum of money, one expects some kind of receipt for it and

certainly when the new Taurus system comes into operation, I shall find some other home for money which I have to invest.

There is also the matter of executors in the event of a death.

It would be extremely difficult for them in some cases to find out what companies the dead person had shares in, particularly if these investments were well spread.

Yours faithfully,
K. P. DAWES,
Courtenay Place,
Lymington,
Hampshire.
March 11.

Interest rates in US expected to remain steady

From Susan Ellicott,
Washington

PRIVATE economists consider that the Federal Reserve is unlikely today to alter United States interest rate policy, amid signs that the worst risk of a recession in the American economy is over.

Many Fed watchers think the Fed's open market committee will not lower rates, even though many banks appear to be tightening credit because of heavier government regulation and uncertainty about the country's economic performance.

Fed officials have publicly expressed views in past weeks that the US economy is not in any immediate danger of falling into a period of negative growth.

Mr Alan Greenspan, the Fed chairman, told Congress that the chances of the United States slipping into a recession had diminished.

Mr Edward Kelly, a Fed governor, told Congress last week he was "confident that the economy has stabilized at a satisfactory level," although he said it was premature to describe US economic performance as improving.



Greenspan: more hopeful

A regional survey of the US economy by the Fed this month showed that the economy was growing slowly while the car industry showed signs of weakness. Inflation is running at an annual rate of about 4.5 per cent, which is considered relatively high in the US.

The last interest change by the Fed was in December when the Federal funds rate, the overnight inter-bank lending rate, was cut a quarter percentage point to about 8.25 per cent.

Policy's purpose

From Mr W. Y. Reid
Sir, Mr Taylor (Business Letters, March 2) must think the Judicial Committee resembles Chief Justice May's Court of Common Pleas, "before whom no case was certain and no case was hopeless."

He is right that the extent to which the law allows recovery of economic loss is a matter of judicial policy. The tug of war between those who would go forward and those who say "back" is one of the law's most engaging spectacles and makes its development somewhat erratic - like driving with one foot on the accelerator and one on the brake. There is a delightful illustration of this in the 1951 accountants' professional liability case *Candler*

Crane Christmas & Co. This also throws light on Mr Taylor's questions.

Mr Candler, considering buying shares, wanted to see the company accounts. A director asked his accountant to give them to him and the accountant also discussed them with him and explained them to him. He knew exactly why this was being done. On the strength of this, Mr Candler bought the shares. In fact, the accounts were wrong, negligently so, and the shares were worthless. Mr Candler sued the accountants. Their counsel argued that no action had ever been allowed for negligent statements. This cut no ice with Lord Denning. In one of those marvellous judgments that light up the law reports like flashbulbs, he

pointed out that this argument was put forward in all the milestone cases.

"On the one side there were the timorous souls who were fearful of allowing a new cause of action. On the other side there were the bold spirits who were ready to allow it if justice so required."

On this occasion, timidity roared back. Asquith LJ said: "I am not concerned with defending the existing state of the law or contending that it is strictly logical - it clearly is not. I am merely recording what I think it is. If this relegates me to the company of 'timorous souls', I must face that consequence with such fortitude as I can command."

Lord Denning, whose view later prevailed, also explained

with characteristic clarity the circumstances in which a duty to take care in making a statement would arise. This happens when to the knowledge of the speaker, the listener will rely on what he says and when it is reasonable for the listener to do so. The duty is, of course, restricted to the known listener. It cannot be extended so as to include strangers of whom the speaker has heard nothing, and whose purposes cannot reasonably have been in his contemplation. Lord Denning expressly cites the example of a Lloyd's Surveyor who, in surveying for classification purposes, negligently passes a mast as sound when it is not. He has no liability to the owner.

"My conclusion is that a duty to use care in statements

is recognised by English Law, and that its recognition does not create any dangerous precedent when it is remembered that it is limited in respect of the persons by whom and to whom it is owed and the transactions to which it applies."

The policy of the law, I suggest, is to avoid what one American judge feared: a liability to an indeterminate number in an indeterminate amount for an indeterminate time. It is not, with respect, to have one policy for valuers and surveyors and another for other professions.

Yours faithfully,
W. Y. REID,
11 Bruce Mansions,
Southsea,
Portsmouth,
Hants.

HOW THE TOP COMPANIES PAY

Below we compare the profits earned by each employee with the average wage and the average director's salary for the leading 100 companies in the UK.

Report, page 4

Company	Profits per employee (£)	Avg wages (£)	Avg directors pay (£)
1 Enterprise Oil	288,500	32,100	77,857
2 Slough Estates	157,100	22,600	90,000
3 Rascol Telecom	92,200	18,300	103,857
4 Lasmo	39,200	26,300	80,666
5 Ultramar	36,900	18,500	489,230
6 Glaxo	35,000	18,700	300,000
7 Carlton Comms	31,100	18,400	
8 Guinness	26,100	15,600	100,000
9 Rothmans Int	23,600	19,200	183,333
10 BAA	22,900	17,100	116,666
11 Reuters	21,400	27,300	66,666
12 BPB Industries	17,000	16,400	99,306
13 British Petroleum	16,500	20,400	285,250
14 British Gas	16,300	14,400	66,666
15 Cable & Wireless	14,300	10,200	130,000
16 Wellcome	13,900	18,500	156,250
17 Tarmac	13,600	12,800	120,000
18 Burmah Oil	13,400	16,800	100,000
19 Blue Circle Industries	12,300	13,400	75,323
20 GUS	12,400	8,600	100,000
21 Cookson	12,400	14,900	150,000
22 Reed International	12,300	16,200	125,000
23 Fisons	12,200	18,200	120,000
24 Hanson	12,000	12,000	66,666
25 Rank Organisation	11,900	8,400	83,333
26 Taylor Woodrow	11,500	13,900	87,500
27 ICI	11,300	17,900	456,250
28 English China Clay	10,900	16,000	66,666
29 Tait & Lyle	10,800	17,200	91,666
30 British Steel	10,700	18,700	73,333
31 Polty Peck Int	10,600	8,700	108,333
32 RTZ	10,400	8,700	123,076
33 British Telecom	10,000	16,200	120,000
34 Redland	9,900	14,500	93,333
35 BAT Industries	9,500	8,400	216,000
36 Maxwell Comms	8,400	20,400	320,000
37 Trafalgar House	8,300	16,500	164,206
38 Smith & Nephew	9,000	11,100	66,666
39 RMC	8,800	13,400	109,090
40 Fisher, Albert	8,800	15,100	136,750
41 Reckitt & Colman	8,800	10,800	129,166
42 Williams	8,600	12,000	171,600
43 BOC	8,500	15,700	245,454
44 BTR	8,300	12,100	108,333
45 Smith Industries	8,210	15,000	110,000
46 United Newspapers	7,700	17,600	128,500
47 Pearson	7,600	13,500	158,333
48 Cadbury Schweppes	7,500	13,600	173,333
49 Kwik Save	7,300	7,900	90,111
50 Marks & Spencer	8,800	8,100	175,000
51 STC	8,800	20,900	115,384
52 Pilkington	6,700	17,100	140,000
53 Allied Lyons	6,200	8,800	222,222
54 Burton	6,000	7,900	380,000
55 Granada	5,900	11,400	100,000
56 Bass	5,900	7,800	123,571
57 Sedgwick	5,800	25,000	163,333
58 P&O	5,700	10,900	226,666
59 CH	5,600	15,600	164,933
60 GEC	5,600	13,100	142,857
61 Scottish & Newcastle	5,400	7,700	100,000
62 British Airways	5,300	20,600	180,000
63 Racal Electronics	5,300	15,300	156,833
64 Ladbroke	5,200	7,700	181,818
65 Rentokil	5,100	8,700	92,308
66 Stebe	5,000	12,500	133,333
67 Dalgety	4,900	13,100	155,555
68 Asda	4,900	5,300	185,714
69 Grand Metropolitan	4,800	8,300	338,889
69 GKN	4,800	14,900	136,363
71 Booker	4,800	8,600	100,000
71 Sears	4,800	5,600	111,111
73 Harrisons & Crosfield	4,500	8,500	91,666
73 RHM	4,500	10,200	129,571
73 Assoc British Foods	4,500	8,900	71,428
76 Thom Ekl	4,400	12,300	337,500
76 Boots	4,400	7,200	146,666
76 Hawker Siddeley	4,300	12,000	166,666
79 Sainsbury	4,200	8,900	123,529
79 Rolta Royce	4,200	15,300	89,333
81 Whitbread	4,000	5,800	40,000
82 Kingfisher	3,900	5,900	218,182
83 Queens Moat Houses	3,900	8,900	82,016
84 Jaguar	3,900	16,300	128,571
86 Tesco	3,800	9,200	130,769
85 United Biscuits	3,600	10,000	166,666
87 Hillson	3,500	9,600	177,777
87 EICC	3,500	12,700	136,363
87 Unilever	3,500	6,200	150,000
90 Lucas Industries	3,300	12,500	89,333
90 Inchcape	3,300	5,400	133,333
92 Courtauld	3,100	10,100	91,666
93 Trusthouse Forte	2,900	7,400	78,571

WORLD MARKET INDICES

Index	Value	Daily chg (%)	Yearly chg (%)	Daily chg (%)	Yearly chg (%)	Daily chg (%)	Yearly chg (%)
The World	730.5	0.7	-13.4	2.2	-10.4	1.4	-13.4
(free)	139.5	0.7	-13.5	2.1	-10.8	1.4	-13.5
EAPE	1281.8	1.6	-17.7	3.1	-13.8	2.2	-17.7
(free)	131.8	1.6	-18.0	3.1	-14.0	2.3	-17.9
Europe	740.3	-0.2	-2.7	0.4	-2.5	0.5	-2.5
(free)	159.4	-0.1	-2.5	0.2	-2.7	0.5	-2.5
Nth America	512.0	-0.8	-4.8	-0.1	-4.7	0.1	-4.8
Nordic	1539.1	-0.7	-1.1	0.1	-1.4	-0.1	-1.1
(free)	242.4	-0.6	3.1	0.3	2.7	0.1	-1.1
Pacific	2827.9	2.6	-28.2	5.2	-20.3	3.6	-26.1
Far East	4238.2	3.1	-26.8	5.4	-20.9	3.7	-26.1
Australia	312.4	-0.5	-10.1	0.2	-4.9	0.2	-10.0
Austria	2123.0	-1.8	42.9	-0.6	44.7	-1.3	42.9
Belgium	919.1	-1.1	-6.8	-0.1	-6.6	-0.4	-6.6
Canada	550.3	-1.3	-8.3	-0.6	-6.9	-0.6	-8.3
Denmark	1395.8	-0.6	6.0	0.0	5.2	-0.2	6.1
Finland	111.8	-1.3	-3.0	-0.4	-3.2	-0.6	-3.0
(free)	148.5	-1.0	-0.3	-0.1	-0.5	-0.4	-0.3
France	782.7	-0.3	-3.2	1.2	-3.4	1.0	-3.2
Germany	2382.3	0.2	7.8	0.8	9.2	0.5	7.8
Hong Kong	370.9	-0.3	6.0	1.1	6.2	1.1	6.1
Italy	4452.9	3.2	-3.8	0.8	-4.3	0.3	-3.7
Japan	908.0	0.1	-3.6	5.6	-21.7	3.9	-27.8
Netherlands	86.6	-0.8	-16.0	-0.4	-13.9	-0.1	-16.0
New Zealand	1631.6	0.2	21.8	1.1	21.8	0.6	21.6
Norway	284.6	0.5	21.8	1.4	22.2	1.2	21.9
(free)	193.4	-2.6	-16.3	-2.1	-18.2	-2.2	-18.3
Spain	1606.2	-0.9	-8.4	0.0	-8.6	-0.2	-8.4
(free)	223.8	-0.9	-7.5	0.0	-7.9	-0.2	-7.5
Switzerland	887.4	-1.2	-6.1	-0.1	-6.5	-0.6	-6.1
(free)	132.2	-1.2	-5.3	0.0	-5.7	-0.5	-5.3
UK	680.8	0.4	-5.6	0.4	-5.8	1.1	-5.5
USA	481.3	-0.7	-4.5	-0.1	-4.5	-0.1	-4.5

(all) Local currency.

Source: Morgan Stanley Capital International.



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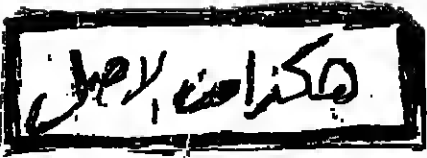
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[illegible]

Exchange index compared with 1985 was up at 86.8 (day's range 86.2-86.8).

Exchange index compared with 1985 is up at 86.8 (day's range 86.2-86.8).						OTHER STEERING RATES	
STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES							
Markets for March 25							
	Range	Close	1 month	3 month			
New York	1,599.0-1,910.0	1,630.0-1,614.0	0.957-0.933	2.63-2.26p	Argentina <i>austrian</i>	8013.51-8086.85	
Moscow	1,894.0-1,900.0	1,893.0-1,989.0	0.87-0.83p		Australia dollar	2,587.2-2,193.1	
Paris	3,019.0-3,025.0	3,019.0-3,025.0	1.12-1.12p		Bahraini riyal	8,025.0-8,011.0	
Brussels	56.92-57.43	57.20-57.37	28-29p		Brazil cruzado	59,709.29-59,709.29	
Copriago	10,419.0-10,425.0	10,419.0-10,425.0	99-100p		Cyprus pound	0.7630-0.7390	
Frankfurt	2,422.45-2,428.10	2,422.45-2,428.10	99-100p		Dutch guilder	263.90-267.10	
Madrid	175.55-177.00	176.84-176.86	15-16p		East German mark	1.00-1.00	
London	242.45-243.50	243.50-244.52	8p-10p		Indian rupee	27,527.57-28.19	
Osaka	10,607.0-10,694.0	10,691.0-10,697.47	2-2 1/2p		Kenyan shilling	0.4729-0.4780	
Paris	3,247.8-3,249.8	3,250.0-3,256.4	4-3 3/4p		Malaysian ringgit	2.47-2.47p	
Frankfurt	2,423.7-2,425.3	2,423.7-2,425.3	11-11 1/2p		Mexican peso	4.39-4.45p	
Tokyo	2,437.7-2,438.3	2,442.0-2,438.3	11-11 1/2p		New Zealand dollar	0.7270-0.7270	
Zurich	2,437.7-2,438.3	2,442.0-2,438.3	11-11 1/2p		Saudi Arabian riyal	8.00-8.00p	
London					Singapore dollar	3.0356-3.0356	
Princeton					Swiss franc	1.9250-1.9250	
P/L = per cent. Discount = da.						Taiwan dollar	
						Tanzanian shilling	
						Thai baht (com)	
						U.S. dollar	
						Yugoslav dinar	
						Lloyds Bank Rates supplied by	
						Econ and Barclays Bank GTS	

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

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THE LAW

Advocates on trial

Solicitors are not bad advocates after all. The best are every bit as convincing, theatrical and articulate as their counterparts at the Bar. I discovered this self-evident truth at the Law Society's 35th advocacy training course in the old spa town of Malvern earlier this month.

My own interest in the course stemmed from pioneering rights of audience in 1983 for solicitors in High Court libel settlements in the case of Leo Abse MP and others v. Cyril Smith MP. The course aims to give articulated clerks (now "trainee solicitors"), newly qualified solicitors and others an insight into pleas in mitigation, bail applications and simple cases in magistrates' courts and county courts.

It was also a timely reminder to City solicitors - accustomed to the cut and thrust of High Court litigation in London - that there are "solicitor advocates" up and down the country doing immensely important and often harrowing work for clients in juvenile courts, child care proceedings, industrial tribunals and magistrates' courts, every day of the week.

The concentrated three-day course was an interesting mixture of lectures, demonstrations from the team leaders and practical exercises in groups. The team

Alastair Brett on a training course

which demonstrates the strengths and weaknesses of the 'solicitor advocate'

LEGAL BRIEF

leaders - we were split into seven groups of 20 each - were specialist advocates from firms like Hunt Dickinson in Nottingham, Cox & Hodgkins in Evesham and Sir David Napley's firm, Kingsley Napley, in London.

Above all, the course taught everyone that "preparation" is the key to successful advocacy. Those of us who had failed to read the background information sheets before the practical exercises on shoplifting, ancillary relief, affray and personal injuries actions ended up receiving the kind of "going over" that county court judges and stipendiary magistrates can give inexperienced young barristers and solicitors who have not done their homework.

Far from finding the course a pleasurable break, I had to get up at 7 am to read the papers and prepare for the practical exercises. The result of this hard work and youthful enthusiasm was that by the third day the hotel was showing concern about the bar

takings from course members.

If the performances of the team leaders demonstrated how good experienced solicitor advocates can be - Susanna Popplestone, from Hunt Dickinson in Nottingham, gave a prize-winning performance as the tearful and distraught mother in the child care demonstration - the lack of experience and forensic analysis of some course members was quite frightening.

Too often the articulated clerk or young solicitor examining or cross-examining a witness had little or no idea in which direction he or she was going. Speeches were left unstructured and essential facts which had to be drawn out in evidence in chief were never properly presented to the court.

By the third day, with the adrenalin running high and course members starting to get an idea of what a busy county court judge

might be like when he could not see where a line of questioning was leading, it was time to go. By then we had an idea of good, bad and indifferent examination in chief, cross-examination and re-examination. Somewhat appropriately, I was asked to cross-examine a "woman police officer", a young assistant solicitor from Lovell White Durrant, who had just arrested someone outside a "print works in Wapping Lane, East London".

After finding out how difficult examination in chief can be, it became clear the course was not long enough, the groups needed to be smaller, and each group might usefully be equipped with a video camera to show people how they performed in examining or cross-examining witnesses.

Short films for screening in the evenings could show course members how barristers, the real High Court "pro", take notes, structure their examinations in chief and work out which lines of cross-examination are worth following up.

Later this year, the Courts and Legal Services Bill will complete its passage through Parliament and Lord Mackay's Advisory Committee on Legal Education and Conduct will decide what qualifications solicitors need before they can take on cases in the Crown and High Court.



Showing the way: team leaders Peter Fimm (left) and John Clitheroe at the advocacy training course

The Law Society's advocacy training course would be a useful start for City solicitors who have no experience of advocacy in the lower courts - magistrates' courts and county courts - but who want to do limited advocacy in the High Court.

But the course needs to be supplemented with a series of additional courses of up to a week for those wanting to specialize in particular divisions of the High Court, or specialist areas such as defamation or building cases in the Official Referee's Court.

Indeed, the Lord Chancellor's original idea of granting "certificates of competence" to advocates so they can appear in certain courts, or in cases involving specialist areas of law, is not such a bad one for those still keen to hear the sound of their own voices, but with no wish to start from scratch doing pleas in mitigation or bail applications.

● The author is Company Solicitor to Times Newspapers.

Law Report March 27 1990 Court of Appeal

Doctor's relationship with family practitioner committee is contractual

Roy v Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster Family Practitioner Committee

Before Lord Justice Neill, Lord Justice Nourse and Lord Justice Balcombe (Judgment March 22)

The relationship between a general medical practitioner and the family practitioner committee which accepted his application for inclusion on the medical list of their locality was contractual.

Where, therefore, a practitioner sought to challenge a committee's decision as to his eligibility for the full rate of basic practice allowance it was appropriate for him to sue on the contract, since from the moment of his inclusion on the medical list he had a contractual, private right to require determination by the committee of such entitlement in accordance with its statutory duty.

The Court of Appeal so held

when allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, Dr Premnath Roy, from an order made by Judge White, sitting as a High Court judge in the Queen's Bench Division (*The Times* March 7, 1989) striking out, as an abuse of the process of the court, parts of the plaintiff's statement of claim delivered in an action against the defendant family practitioner committee.

Mr Michael Briggs for Dr Roy; Mr Richard Greening for the committee.

LORD JUSTICE BALCOMBE said that the reason for the judge's decision had been that in respect of those parts of the claim which the judge had struck out, the plaintiff should have applied for judicial review rather than have proceeded by ordinary action.

The plaintiff was a general medical practitioner who had since 1954 practised in the area for which the defendants were

responsible. He was on the list of doctors undertaking, for the purposes of the National Health Service Act 1977, to provide general medical services for persons in the committee's locality.

Since at least the mid-1960s he had always had more than 1,000 patients registered with him. There had been no complaints from individual patients of the service that Dr Roy had provided.

However, he had frequently been absent from the practice. Between 1979 and 1987 he had been absent, either due to sickness or being away on holiday, for totals ranging from 87 to 186 days in each year.

His absences had always been covered by his employing a locum, without complaint from his patients.

Under the terms and conditions of service which applied to Dr Roy, a practitioner was eligible for the full rate of basic

practice allowance if "(a) he provides general medical services and has 1,000 or more patients on his ordinary list... and (b) he is in the opinion of the responsible committee devoting a substantial amount of time to general practice under the National Health Service (paragraph 12.1 of the Statement of Fees and Allowances payable to General Medical Practitioners in England and Wales).

The committee had formed the opinion that Dr Roy had not been devoting a substantial amount of his time to his practice. From January 1, 1985 the committee had paid to Dr Roy only 80 per cent of the full rate of basic practice allowance.

Dr Roy had taken the view that his employment of a locum during his periods of absence had meant that those periods had not detracted from the time he had devoted to general practice and on July 22, 1986 he

had issued a writ endorsed with a statement of claim claiming, *inter alia*, the balance of the basic practice allowance from January 1, 1985 which he alleged to be due.

The two issues raised on the appeal were (i) was the relationship between Dr Roy and the committee one of contract, and (ii) was Dr Roy entitled to his rights against the committee, whatever they might be, by ordinary action?

The relevant statutory provision was section 29 of the 1977 Act which, as amended by the Family Practitioner Committees (Consequential Modifications) Order (SI 1985 No 39), provided: "(1) It is the duty of every family practitioner committee, in accordance with regulations, to arrange as respects their locality with medical practitioners to provide personal medical services for all persons in the locality who wish

to take advantage of the arrangements.

"(2) The services so provided are referred to in this Act as 'general medical services'."

The relevant regulations were the National Health Service (General Medical and Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations (SI 1974 No 160), as amended by the 1985 Order.

The terms of service for doctors were defined by regulation 2(1) and were set out in Part I of Schedule 1 to the 1974 Regulations, and by paragraph 12 of that Part of the Regulations there were deemed to form part of the terms of service: (a) the regulations themselves; and (b) any statement published under regulation 24 so far as those affected the rights and obligations of doctors.

The Statement of Fees and Allowances to which his Lordship had referred was published pursuant to regulation 24.

In his Lordship's judgment the application by a general practitioner to a family practitioner committee for inclusion on the medical list of their locality constituted an offer in writing to perform general medical services in the family practitioner committee's locality upon the terms which had been defined.

When that application was accepted by the committee, the acceptance was communicated to the applicant (either by letter or by the inclusion of his name in the medical list) a contract between the applicant and the committee for the performance of services under the terms of the regulations was constituted.

All the indicia of a contract were present. There was consideration consisting of the promise by the applicant to perform general medical services under the terms of the regulations for the promise by the committee to pay for those services

in accordance with the Statement of Fees and Allowances.

"If the relationship were not contractual it was difficult to see what else it could be."

Moreover, no attempt had been made to argue for a non-contractual relationship in the closely analogous case of *R v East Berkshire Health Authority, Ex parte Walsh* ([1985] QB 152).

Procedural question Since Dr Roy's rights against the committee sounded in contract, on the face of it there would appear to be no reason why he should not sue on the contract by ordinary action.

Nevertheless, that still left open the question raised on the committee's application to strike out the relevant parts of the statement of claim: was Dr Roy confined to the procedure by judicial review in order to bring the issue before the court?

In his Lordship's judgment a person who had rights under a contract was entitled to sue on that contract by ordinary action. A consideration of *O'Reilly v Mackman* ([1983] 2 AC 237) and *Cocks v Thanet District Council* ([1983] 2 AC 286) supported that proposition.

In the latter case the House of Lords had held that the statutory duty fell into two parts: a public law duty to determine whether an applicant fulfilled the statutory conditions which entitled him to be housed, which could only be enforced by judicial review, and only when that determination had been made in his favour did a private law duty, enforceable by ordinary action, arise.

In the instant case Dr Roy had had from the moment of his inclusion on the medical list a contractual, that is, a private, right to have the committee determine whether he was en-

titled to the full rate of basic allowance in accordance with their duty under paragraph 12.1.

In any event the point was conclusively determined in Dr Roy's favour by the Court of Appeal's decision in *Walsh*. In that case the court had accepted that the employee's terms of tenure were determined by statute, but nevertheless held that he was seeking to enforce a contractual right under his contract of employment so that judicial review was inappropriate.

Even if there were an element of public duty in the formation by the committee of its opinion under paragraph 12.1, that would not be sufficient to prevent Dr Roy enforcing his private, contractual rights by ordinary action, see: *O'Reilly v Mackman*, per Lord Diplock (at p285).

His Lordship said that since writing his judgment he had noted the report of the Court of Appeal in *R v Derbyshire County Council, Ex parte Noble* (*The Times* February 21). That decision seemed wholly consistent with the views which his Lordship had expressed.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE, concurring, added that if a practitioner wished to question an initial decision by the committee not to accept his application to be included on the list of doctors, he had in that case to take proceedings for judicial review.

At that stage no contract had come into existence and the practitioner's only right was a public-law right to have his application properly considered.

Lord Justice Neill delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Hempsnall, Capstick, Hamer & Co, South Kensington.

Interlocutory discretionary power to state case to be used sparingly

Regina v Chesterfield Justices, Ex parte Kovacs and Another

Before Mr Justice Roch (Judgment March 17)

Justices possessed a discretionary power to state a case on an interlocutory matter or prior to the determination of an appeal to them in a civil case but that discretion should be exercised only in exceptional cases.

Mr Justice Roch so held in the Queen's Bench Division when refusing to grant judicial review of the refusal of Chesterfield Justices to state a case on a preliminary issue before their determination of an appeal by the applicants, Ms Charlotte Kovacs and Ms Heather Farrant, against a prohibition notice served on them by Derbyshire Fire Service.

The applicants were tenants of a flat comprising the ground floor, first floor and second floor of a terraced house in Chesterfield and lived there with their small children. The lower ground floor of the house consisted of a self-contained flat with independent access.

On October 10, 1989 Derbyshire Fire Service made a prohibition notice, in pursuance of section 10 of the Fire Prevention Act 1971, with the effect that occupation was restricted to the ground floor and basement so that the applicants and their children would not be able to use the bathroom and lavatory or any of the bedrooms.

The risk alleged in the notice was "inadequate means of escape from the first and second floors".

Contravention of the restriction would be an offence under section 10B of the 1971 Act, as substituted by section 9 of the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport Act 1987, and an offender would be liable on summary conviction to an unlimited fine or a term of imprisonment not exceeding two years, or both.

The schedule of works required covered three pages and included the provision of six fire retaining doors, three emergency lighting points, two fire alarms of the type activated by the breaking of glass, one fitted internally next to the front door and the other by the back door,

four escape route notices - one in each bedroom, one fire extinguisher of the dry powder type, one of the water type, one alarm which detected heat, one which detected smoke, two fire exit signs and a self-push-bar device on the back door.

Both applicants were in receipt of income support. Neither had any capital.

Section 10A(1) of the 1971 Act, as substituted, provided a right of appeal to the justices within 21 days from the date on which the notice was served.

Mr Graham Robinson for the applicants; the justices did not appear; and were not represented.

MR JUSTICE ROCH said that legal aid was not available for appeals against a prohibition notice - a starting omission because many of the people who would be served and who might have to give up the accommodation occupied by them and their children, which might in turn lead to children and parents being separated, would be unable to afford legal representation and unable to represent themselves at court. Here the prospect was of the applicants' children being taken into care.

On October 13, an application by Mr C. W. Bellamy, Ms Kovacs' solicitor, for the notice to be suspended until the hearing of the appeal was granted by the justices.

At the appeal, the justices agreed to consider as a preliminary point whether section 10 of the Act gave the fire authority power to serve a prohibition notice in respect of the applicants' house.

The justices decided there was such a power. Mr Bellamy asked the justices to adjourn to state a case but it was contended by the clerk to the justices that they had no jurisdiction to state a case at that point since the power did not arise until a final determination of the appeal.

The justices refused to adjourn. In the meantime the prohibition notice had been stayed by Mr Justice Rose to maintain the status quo. In his Lordship's judgment the justices did have power to state a case prior to the final determination of the appeal.

There was persuasive authority that they did not have such a power in *Stromer v Copping* ([1985] QB 920) but there the matter before the justices was clearly criminal.

In *Loade v DPP* ([1989] 3 WLR 1281, 1290) Lord Justice Neill, having considered, *inter alia*, *Stromer v Copping* had said: "... the High Court will not entertain an appeal by way of case stated in a criminal case unless the crown court has made a final determination. In other proceedings, however, including proceedings which involve the grant or refusal of licences, it is not open to this court to reach the same conclusion."

He had gone on to say (at p1291) that the jurisdiction existed in civil cases, but it should be exercised sparingly and only in exceptional circumstances.

His Lordship held that the power of magistrates to state a case at an interlocutory stage in civil proceedings was the same as the power of the crown court when hearing an appeal in a civil matter. That power was discretionary.

Once the final determination had been made they had to state a case unless, under section 111(5) of the Magistrates Courts Act 1971 they were of the opinion that the application was frivolous.

That was not the case where the application was made at an interlocutory stage where matters were for the discretion of the justices and of the High Court and, as Lord Justice Neill had said, it was a jurisdiction to be exercised sparingly and only in exceptional circumstances.

His Lordship had concluded that this was not a case where such exceptional circumstances existed and he was prepared to trust in the good commonsense of the justices, both when it came to deciding what modifications they considered fit to make to the prohibition order, and in the making of a further direction suspending the operation of the notice in order to give the opportunity for the legal issue to be tested in the High Court.

Solicitors: Blakesley & Routh, Chesterfield.

LEGAL APPOINTMENTS

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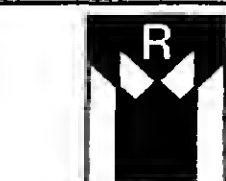
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THE LAW

Cutting out the legal jargon

Sandwiched between the Budget and the mid-Staffordshire by-election, the launch last week of TransAction, the Law Society's National Conveyancing Protocol Scheme, lacked the good timing necessary to achieve maximum publicity and impact. To compound the embarrassment, some rank-and-file solicitors are unhappy that the society failed to deliver its information to them on schedule.

"In terms of publicity, it has left a lot to be desired," says one solicitor. "What does the Law Society think it is playing at? Its performance over the launch of the scheme could not have been worse."

But while the society is winning few plaudits for its publicity skills, its rating on the scheme itself is high. Solicitors up and down the country's high streets are applauding TransAction as an important step in improving the efficiency of the service they give to the public.

Stephen Gold, solicitor and author of *Gold's Law*, and a popularizer of legal issues, says: "I welcome TransAction as a way of cutting through the mystique which has surrounded conveyancing for far too long."

Just as important, Mr Gold says, is that the spirit of simplicity and efficiency should be carried through

Edward Fennell explains how the Law Society's new TransAction scheme should simplify conveyancing

to lawyers' other communications with clients. "We should be missing a great opportunity if we failed to translate our correspondence into plain English. We must have consistency between the contract and the solicitors' letters."

Karen Conway, of Cranswick Watson, says: "Here in Yorkshire, it is going to make a big difference. It should definitely speed up the transaction and it should also do something to improve the image problem of solicitors."

The public perception of lawyers as slow and inefficient is clearly a worry that still weighs heavily on many solicitors, especially as the threat of competition from the financial institutions is starting to take on formidable shape.

But the real question is whether

or not TransAction will help solicitors collectively in the conveyancing market place. Or, indeed, whether it will, as David Knox of Barlows, a Guildford firm, put it, "enable the Law Society to steel a march on the Lord Chancellor."

"I am afraid I think that we may have gone past the point at which we could fight off the financial institutions," says Emyr Pierce, of Merrills Edge, a Cardiff legal firm. "We should have done it years ago."

One observer of the legal scene believes that once the big financial institutions get involved in conveyancing, offering it as part of their home-buying package, they will take 10 per cent of the market from solicitors within the first 12 months. For TransAction to be an effective marketing tool in the profession's hands, he says, it should have been launched in the mid-1980s when the house market was buoyant.

Meanwhile, solicitors throughout the country will, no doubt, be using TransAction as a publicity weapon to fight each other. Ian Slinger, of Midlands firm Owston, for example, has become the local TransAction guru in Leicestershire by appearing on local radio and writing for the local newspaper. A good opportunity for him, certainly, but it may be a bit too late for the profession as a whole.



Solicitor Stephen Gold: "I welcome a way of cutting through the mystique"

INNS AND OUTS

Despite all the petty squabbling over the Courts and Legal Services Bill, the Bar Council and the Law Society are united in their concern over one issue: the declining level of eligibility for help under the legal aid schemes. In a joint letter to the Lord Chancellor last week, the two bodies called for an independent review of legal aid eligibility, to report within six months. They argue that the general review of the legal aid scheme announced by the Lord Chancellor last year is flawed. It will take two to three years to complete, and the focus on the "better targeting" of legal aid sounds suspiciously as though it will lead to a further restriction on eligibility. The fact that the review will be conducted by civil servants behind closed doors is also worrying, especially when the Government has hotly disputed the findings of previous reviews.

A speedy independent review is urgently needed because eligibility levels have failed to modify to take into account progressive increases in disposable income. The annual uprating of eligibility levels by 5.2 per cent does not even keep eligibility limits in line with inflation. In 1979, the head of a household with a dependent spouse and two children, earning an average income, was eligible for contributory legal aid. Today he would not qualify for any help under the scheme. The same individual earning two thirds of the national average income, would have to contribute 7.02 per cent of gross income in order to qualify, compared with no contributions in 1979.

While the City grumbled about the Budget, the flags went out on the desks of women all over the country. John Major hit the right button when he announced that from April 6 employees will be exempt from income tax on the benefit of workplace nurseries provided by their employers. The exemption applies to nurseries run at the place of work or elsewhere by either the employer alone or jointly with other employers, voluntary bodies or local authorities. The pressure on law firms to provide nursery facilities for the growing numbers of women lawyers, as well as the female members of their support staff, will now be intense.

But whether the City law firms will want to splash out on nursery facilities in these increasingly troubled times is open to question as the recent plight of accountancy firms has shown. Much of their fantastic growth in the late 1980s came from setting up corporate finance and management consultancy arms, high margin business which fed off the accountants' staple auditing work. But in these difficult days the first thing the client is cutting back on is specialist consultancy services.

The premium work is dwindling away and with incomes increasing at barely 7 per cent, the accountants are starting to feel the squeeze. The City law firms have also grown used to a steady diet of advising on mergers and acquisitions, flotations and management buy-outs, often in direct competition with the accountancy firms. And the lawyers are suffering the same drop in work. Riding on the boom, many grew rapidly, taking on more lawyers, merging and opening expensive overseas offices (especially Tokyo). City watchers anticipate signs of stress.

Recipients of the first issue of the recently launched *Legal Business* may have been impressed by the long list of "founder subscribers" which, the magazine claimed, gave it a "larger subscriber-base than the *New Law Journal*, *The Solicitors Journal* or the *Lawyer*". However, word has reached Scrivenor that some of the firms listed were rather upset to see their name used in that way. Founder subscriber meant, it seems, that a firm had indicated it was interested in seeing the new publication, with a view to subscribing, but as a later letter from the publisher, *Legalease*, confirmed "It was specifically agreed that the firm would be under no obligation to proceed." If the firm did choose to subscribe, all the partners and senior managers would receive copies at a substantial discount. *Legal Business* rather looks as if it has put the cart before the horse.

Scrivenor

Why I oppose the wind of change

Should we meddle with a highly respected contracts procedures?

An important international change is pending which has received little attention. The UK Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods is the subject of a consultation document from the Department of Trade and Industry, dated June this year.

The convention, already ratified by 19 countries, including the United States, proposes a new law for "cross-border" sale of goods. Its provisions are complex but not comprehensive. National law of the contracting parties will still be relevant, even when the countries of both have ratified.

This is because some important elements of contract law, such as when property passes, the validity of the contract, the effect of usage, liability for death or personal injury and the essential requirement of capacity to contract, are all left to be decided by national law. National laws, of course, differ widely on the subject.

The stated object of adopting "uniform rules which govern contracts for the International Sale of

Goods" so as to "... contribute to the removal of legal barriers in international trade" is obviously desirable - but not so easy to achieve. It is not, regrettably, likely to be realized by ratification of the convention because so much of national law remains.

International accord on vexed questions such as the need to establish commercial benefit in relation to reliance on guarantees by a parent of a subsidiary company's liability, contracts outside the scope of a company's memorandum of association, and the like are not mentioned in the convention.

Worse, the existing certainty of our own law of contract would be undermined by provisions in Article 8 of the convention, which provides that the written terms as agreed between the parties could be displaced if one party were to rely on preceding negotiations or subsequent conduct as proof of the

intent of either party at the time of contracting. This might displace the intention set out in the written contract itself.

Certainty as to the terms and effects of the contract is of paramount importance and would be imperilled by the provision of "convention law", should it apply.

Two earlier conventions with the same basic theme are already part of our law by reason of the Uniform Laws on International Sales Act 1967. There is no single case recorded of any contract subject to the provisions of this Act coming before the courts for interpretation or enforcement. The vital difference is that the earlier conventions do not apply unless the contracting parties say they shall. Presumably, few have done so. This contrasts with the provisions of the present convention in that a contract as defined would be subject to the "convention law", unless the

contracting parties expressly excluded it.

The trouble is that people tend to forget. "Convention law", if not excluded, will apply and our own business community may find itself, to its own surprise, faced with a defence, perhaps, that the other party to the contract had no capacity to contract under his/her own national law or bound by terms which our UK businessmen have never heard of, and which even then may be varied because of the intentions of the opposing party at the time or, even because of subsequent events.

A further cogent point is that if the UK ratifies it, "convention law" will become part of English law. At present, English law, and the judges who administer it, are so highly regarded that of cases heard in the Commercial Court in the last year the parties were split roughly 50-50 between English and foreign litigants and, almost more surprising, nearly 30 per cent of all the cases had no English litigant at all.

This tremendous accolade for English law and for English justice must be imperilled by the UK adopting a common denominator, a "convention law" thrashed out around a negotiating table, to which nobody had seriously objected but in which there is clearly no discernible advantage, either.

Convention law is to be interpreted by the courts of all the countries concerned. This raises a somewhat daunting prospect and the unanswered question of "what happens when interpretations differ?" We must not be deceived by the glib lure of a uniformity that will not be achieved. We must not imperil the excellent status English law and its administrators undoubtedly have in the eyes of the world.

Derek Wheatley QC

● The author, formerly chief legal adviser at Lloyds Bank, is now in private practice at the Bar.

01-481 4481

LEGAL APPOINTMENTS

Continued on next page

Legal Recruitment for the Discerning Lawyer

We have established a reputation for providing Lawyers seeking a career move with the most comprehensive, informed and professional service available. We do not see recruitment as a numbers game in which the agency acts merely as a jobs broker. Our role is to advise our candidates on the best way to maximise their career potential, without pushing them into situations which are patently unsuitable. All of our Consultants are qualified Lawyers with practical legal experience who understand the jobs

market and where you are most likely to fit into it. Our clients include every major practice in the country, numerous small and medium sized practices and countless financial institutions and industrial concerns.

Contact Simon Lipson, Michael Silver or Joce Mesrié, all of whom are Solicitors or Lucy Boyd, a Barrister to discuss the positions set out below or the many other opportunities registered with us.

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The Head of Personnel will have responsibility for developing and maintaining effective personnel policies, procedures and remuneration schemes to attract, retain and motivate the highest calibre of professionals and support personnel which have been critical to the Firm's success to date.

The successful applicant is unlikely to be under the age of 30 and will be currently operating within a sophisticated personnel environment. A degree and membership of the Institute of Personnel Management would be an advantage; more important are excellent communication skills, a good intellect and a creative but practical approach to problem solving. Knowledge of pensions legislation would be an advantage.

All applications will be dealt with in the strictest confidence. Please write to Clare Tattersall at Spicers Executive Selection, Friary Court, 65 Crutched Friars, London EC3N 2NP, enclosing a full Curriculum Vitae.



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For more details of these or the many more opportunities we have available throughout Central London and the Provinces, call or send full CV to Andrew Vivian or Paul Staplehurst.
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Continued From
Previous Page

LEGAL APPOINTMENTS

01-481 4481

International
Finance Seminar

Linklaters & Paines

International Finance has been one of the major growth areas in the City for a number of years. It includes an exciting mix of securities issues, syndicated loans, project financing and other banking transactions, as well as cross-border acquisition financing – often involving overseas travel and aggressive timetables.

Opportunities abound for young energetic lawyers, although understandably they are sometimes wary of entering a field in which they have little or no relevant experience.

We have invited Terence Kyle, Head of the International Finance Section of Linklaters & Paines, one of the leading firms in this area, to talk about what it is like to be an international finance lawyer and the training involved.

Afterwards, you will be able to talk informally over drinks with him and a number of his colleagues, including some who have recently joined the firm.

The seminar should be of particular interest to both solicitors and barristers, especially those recently qualified or approaching qualification this year.

If you would like to attend the evening, which is to be held on 4th April 1990 at 6.30pm at Michael Page Legal, 39-41 Parker Street, London WC2B 5LH please call Katrina Smith on 01-831 2000 or write to her at the above address.



Michael Page Legal
International Recruitment Consultants

FRERE CHOLMELEY

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Frere Cholmeley is a leading London firm with offices in Brussels, Paris, Monte Carlo and Milan; it will soon be opening in East Berlin. The aviation group needs to increase its strength and capacity to meet constantly developing client needs.

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If you would like to apply please write in confidence, enclosing a CV, to:

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Please send your detailed cv to J. Hilliker, Personnel Manager, Mercantile Group plc, Churchill Plaza, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 1GP.

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Applicants should be Solicitors or Barristers and whilst Local Government experience is desirable, it is not essential and newly admitted applicants will be considered.

Closing date: 17th April 1990.

Application form and further particulars available from and returnable to the Borough Personnel Officer, Civic Centre, Millgate, Wigan or telephone our 24 hour answering service on Wigan (0942) 42472 and leave your name and address.

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Our client is a medium-sized practice whose dynamic young team of Partners have been responsible for the remarkably rapid development of a substantial clientele, including public and private companies and local authorities.

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They should also have the ambition, enthusiasm and personal qualities to facilitate the continued growth of the practice.

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£35K + Car
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For further information please call or write to Karen Mulvill or Ian Pearce on

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Please telephone to arrange a confidential meeting, or write with your CV to James McGrory, Harding Legal Division, 2 Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, Dartmouth Street, London SW1H 9BP. Tel: 01-222 7733.

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Closing date for applications 30th April 1990.

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LEGAL APPOINTMENTS

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- corporate finance including acquisitions
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- design, construction and technology agreements
- international trading and shipping
- competition
- commercial and consumer
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Applicants must have a consistently good academic record, including an honours degree in an appropriate discipline, not necessarily law, and have had at least two years legal experience in private practice or industry after qualifying as a Solicitor or Barrister. Apart from working to the highest professional standards, you should possess the ability to communicate clearly and effectively with all levels of management and to play a full part as a member of multi-discipline business teams.

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For applications to both Shell companies, please write or telephone for an application form quoting reference 0/009 to:

Shell U.K. Limited, UKPR/5
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Telephone: 01-257 3929

The closing date for return of applications is 17th April 1990.



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For further information, please contact Jonathan Macrae on 01-405 6062 (01-672 8340 evenings/weekends) or write to him at Quarry Dougall Recruitment, 9 Brownlow Street, London WC1V 6JD.

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Applicants should have relevant information qualification together with some legal knowledge. Experience of working in a commercial environment would be an advantage.

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LEGAL APPOINTMENTS

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LEGAL INFORMATION AND LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

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Specific duties will include conducting research, maintaining and enhancing the quality and range of information services offered to qualified staff, the development of databases, overall responsibility for information files, precedents, practice notices and standard forms, and conducting induction training. In addition, the Manager will be responsible for the management and training of the Department's staff of six and the annual budget.

The successful candidate will ideally be aged between 28 and 36 and educated to degree level with a qualification in Information Services or Librarianship. He or she will be able to relate readily to high calibre professionals and may already be working as an Information Services Manager in a law firm, another professional practice or a bank.

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For further information, please contact **Alistair Dougall** or **Adrian Fox** on 01-405 6062 (01-773 3702 evenings/weekends) or write to **Quarry Dougall Recruitment**, 9 Brownlow Street, London WC1V 6JD.



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For further information, please contact **Jonathan Macrae** on 01-405 6062 (01-672 8340 evenings/weekends) or write to him at **Quarry Dougall Recruitment**, 9 Brownlow Street, London WC1V 6JD.



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Please reply in writing, enclosing full cv, Reference EJ1256
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Please specify any companies to whom your CV should not be forwarded.

LBW

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Please write with full CV to: **Cathy Mercer, Personnel Manager**, Safeway plc, 6 Millington Road, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 4AY. Tel: 01-756 2174.

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LEGAL NOTICES

Continued from page 15

IN THE MATTER OF ACCOUNTING AND TAXATION SERVICES LIMITED AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1948. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT in accordance with Rule 1.08 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 notice is hereby given that I, Philip Monck, FCA, a Licensed Insolvency Practitioner of Messrs. Leonard Curtis & Co., 30 Broadmead, London W1G 9LF, have appointed Liquidators of the above Company by the members and creditors on 19th March 1990.

IN THE MATTER OF THE INSOLVENCY ACT 1986. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT in accordance with Rule 1.08 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 notice is hereby given that I, Philip Monck, FCA, a Licensed Insolvency Practitioner of Messrs. Leonard Curtis & Co., 30 Broadmead, London W1G 9LF, have appointed Liquidators of the above Company by the members and creditors on 19th March 1990.

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— /

HORIZONS

Academic skills on the factory floor

An expanding graduate scheme is reaping rewards for industry and colleges. Sally Watts discovers how much they can learn from each other

Young science and technology graduates of a good academic standard can give their career a strong start through the Teaching Company Scheme (TCS), in which they form a link between industry and a centre of higher education.

The maximum age is normally 28, and graduates — who are known as associates — should have a first or upper second degree, though this may be waived if they have particularly relevant work experience.

An associateship lasts two years, during which the graduate helps the employing company to achieve greater efficiency and competitiveness by updating and developing its processes and equipment. Throughout this time, he or she is backed by the academic staff of the university or polytechnic partnering the company.

This early industrial experience greatly enhances the graduates' career prospects. John Monnor, acting director of the TCS, says: "They develop very far and fast. About half stay on with their company. Many are appointed to middle management and a lot soon reach senior management.

The idea is to get technically qualified managers for industry."

Although not new, the scheme has developed considerably over the past few years. Today, it has 360 partnerships between industry and academic centres. Nearly every university and most polytechnics take part, and one or two institutes of higher education, including Dorset.

Originally, TCS was restricted to manufacturing technology, but now it covers virtually all areas of technology and science — including pure science — and, more recently, management. In addition, greater attention is given to formal specialist training for associates, both in their own subject and in management development.

Jamie Lyke, 23, is a relatively new associate. Since September, he has been a manufacturing engineer with Caledonian Mining Company at Newark. After his degree in mechanical engineering, manufacturing and management at Birmingham, he did an advanced course in design, manufacture and management at Cambridge, the academic partner in his associateship.

His work, he says, offers "autonomy, scope and responsibility". Jamie, who hopes to join



Hands-on experience: Jamie Lyke, manufacturing engineer working at the Caledonian Mining Company

the staff when his two years end, added: "I am getting wide experience with training and the opportunity to use diverse technologies."

"No one should be put off by the 'teaching' part of the title. It's not just academic: there's the opportunity to mix with all levels of management."

A few years further on, Steve Foster, a former associate, is 29 and already in senior management as factory manager of a Liverpool metal finishing company, King

and Fowler, where he hopes to introduce a TCS. His degree was in mechanical engineering and his first job was as a graduate trainee, but he left to join a TCS linked with Wolverhampton Polytechnic, believing this would be a faster route.

He was right. "It was an ideal way of growing up quickly: dealing with people on the shop floor and having contact with the two directors. The work was very interesting."

"The scheme helped me in team

leading and management. It gave me a high profile, a lot of training and a great boost in getting my next job." He was taken on as manufacturing systems engineer with the Lucas group, one of a team set up to reorganize and modernize Lucas sites.

The TCS has four sponsors: the Department of Trade and Industry, the Science and Engineering Research Council (each contributing £5 million a year), the Economic and Social Research Council and the Department of

'Associates can develop very far and fast... about half stay on'

Economic Development for Northern Ireland. About half the programmes are with small firms, and the TCS wants to raise the number to 60 per cent.

The scheme has two main functions: to bring the expertise of academics into industry, and to develop able graduates for industrial careers, backed by practical training and a real work environment. Women associates are increasing and the TCS is keen to enrol more.

Associates are paid a full industrial salary, 60 per cent of which comes from the teaching company, the balance from the employing company, and some have a company car.

A good example of how companies benefit from the scheme comes from Whitcroft plc, a holding company at Wilmslow, which over the past three years has employed six associates for its small firms, specializing in textiles, engineering and lighting.

Through its partnership with Salford University, Whitcroft has gained an understanding of the long-term needs of an old-established engineering company. Associates have helped the company to determine how best to update the machinery and to

choose new equipment. Other graduates have worked on marketing schemes in textile and lighting companies, backed by Salford's business department, and one has helped to implement a quality control system.

"We are very supportive of the scheme," says Dr Richard Galt, group personnel director. "It enables us to get good young graduates and have very useful contact with the university. We are now putting ourselves forward for three more schemes."

Academic centres also benefit from the liaison between professional staff and top industrial management. Professor George Thompson, who introduced the scheme at Nottingham Polytechnic, explains that teaching and syllabus content are enhanced through contact with the practical applications (rather than just theory) of new technology.

Projects of final year students benefit too, because they have greater relevance. The scheme can also lead to additional staff activities, such as consultancies of developing short courses.

For the graduate, there is up-to-date training and a high level of work and research, which tempts many to do a second degree. And the "competitive salary", says Prof Thompson, is higher than for non-associates. He adds: "It's delightful to see a raw young graduate arguing a technical point with the managing director."

● The Teaching Company, Sudbury House, Leighton Road, Faringham, Oxfordshire SN7 8AA.

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For an informal discussion please contact Peter Bledwin, Principal Health Officer (Contracts Management/Marketing) on Chichester 785166, extension 2212.

Application form and further details available from the Personnel Department, Chichester District Council, East Pallant House, East Pallant, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1TY. Telephone Chichester 785166, extension 5113. Closing date: 9 April 1990.



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OUR I.T. STRATEGY

Built around the Council's unique structure which organises all of its services in seven autonomous Neighbourhoods, our strategy is as ambitious as anything being pursued in local government. The technology is at the leading edge and we are installing a network of IBM AS400s — one in each Neighbourhood and one for the central departments. We need staff to work on priority applications, e.g. Social Services, Housing Repairs, Personnel, to work in our project office co-ordinating the Strategy and to lead or assist in the setting up of a help desk service — up to £20,000.

Resources are not just required for the central I.T. group. Our Neighbourhoods also need Systems Administrators for the new AS400s. We need a number of staff to run the AS400 on a day-to-day basis. This will be an excellent training ground for a career in I.T. — up to £15,000.

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Technical support is critical to the success of all our I.T. projects and we have a separate team specialising in network management, telecommunications, security and data protection. We need people keen to learn the technical aspects of I.T. or with considerable experience in running networks or leading on telecommunication projects — up to £20,000.

MICRO APPLICATIONS

Micro applications form another important arm in the overall development of Information Technology both in the Neighbourhoods and the Centre with a user base in excess of 500. Tower Hamlets has standardised on IBM hardware and the following software: DWA, SC5, d Base, Clipper and Pagemaker. We need people with a proven track record in applications development and support. Experience in Novell networks and PC based project management would also be useful — up to £20,000.

DIRECT LABOUR SYSTEM

In parallel with these developments, the Council is also implementing a discrete BULL direct labour system. This is seen as crucial to the long term survival of our direct labour organisation and its successful introduction is of the highest priority. We need someone to run the new system and more junior staff to assist in the on-going development — up to £20,000.

FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

Additionally, our financial systems are delivered through a shared mainframe which is managed outside the organisation by LOJA but which requires a level of co-ordination and direction from the Authority. We need staff comfortable and interested in working with financial systems. Some experience in finance would be advantageous — up to £18,500.

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All of the above are underpinned and supported by training both for the user and management. It has a high profile and is seen as essential to effective implementation in every area. In keeping with our commitment to training, this team needs more resources. You could be a trainer interested in I.T. or an I.T. specialist interested in training — up to £20,000.

Clearly, we are looking for a wide range of individuals: this could therefore be your first venture into I.T., or it could be your opportunity to lead a team developing a major application on our AS400s. The implementation of our strategy requires individuals of the highest calibre both in the central group and the Neighbourhood teams.

If you have the necessary skills and experience, or simply an interest, in any of the above, we would like to hear from you. We are strongly committed to the personal and technical development of our staff and will make a major commitment to improving your skills and broadening your experience. As you can see, salaries range from £10,000 to £20,000 plus a competitive benefits package. A full information pack including job descriptions, person specifications and full details about our I.T. initiatives is available from Personnel Reception, Town Hall, Patriot Square, London E2 9LN, or telephone: 01-980 4831 ext 5218.

Furthermore if you wish to discuss any of the above posts or what is going on in I.T. in Tower Hamlets, please ring John Tipping on extension 5263.

Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets has transformed local Government by decentralising service delivery and accountability to seven Neighbourhoods.

What Tower Hamlets is achieving today others will attempt tomorrow.

The commitment, energy, drive and innovation of staff are essential to our success.

Tower Hamlets is committed to effective implementation of its Equal Opportunities Policy.

Applications are considered on the basis of their suitability for the post(s) regardless of sex, sexual orientation, religion, racial origin, marital status, disablement or age.

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Edberg transformed by inexplicable run of unforced errors

From Andrew Longmore, Tennis Correspondent, Key Biscayne, Florida

TENNIS players have always been sceptical of statistics. As Ivan Lendl says, it does not matter how many aces he serves to a match, it is when he serves that is important. But, after his unexpected defeat by Andre Agassi in the final of the Lipton International on Sunday, Stefan Edberg should take note of one statistic: in four sets, lasting two hours seven minutes, he made 72 unforced errors.

Not surprisingly, as there had been little sign of such fragility during the week, Edberg was at a loss to explain the sudden disintegration of his technique. Going into the final, he had won 16 out of 18 matches this year and one of those defeats was because of injury in the final of the Australian Open. He had beaten Agassi in the final at Indian Wells a fortnight ago.

"I just couldn't get to the ball," Edberg said. "He played very well and I was a step behind myself. I had no timing and felt a little flat."

Even after this loss, Edberg has climbed above Becker to be the world No. 2, so consistently has he played since he became Masters champion in November. He would have preferred to have done it with more style. Just 24 hours earlier, Emilio Sanchez, his

semi-final victim, had been wondering if Edberg could play any better.

Edberg's enigmatic display should take nothing away from Agassi, whose own reward, apart from the \$179,500 (£112,000) first prize, was to leapfrog over Brad Gilbert to No. 4 in the rankings. Amid a background of tension over his refusal to play in the Davis Cup tie against Czechoslovakia in Prague at the end of this week, Agassi has played sparkling tennis, culminating in his 6-1, 6-4, 6-1 victory to take his first Lipton title and the biggest win of his career.

Edberg, in particular, will testify to the renewed zip in Agassi's legs. Several times, the American retrieved volleys and overheads which Edberg thought were winners, and when one desperate backhand lunge sailed over Edberg's head in the fourth set and landed on the baseline, the Swede's spirit was finally broken. "If I hit that shot 10 times, I'd be lucky to make it once," Agassi admitted.

Luck, however, has had only a little part to play in Agassi's improved start to the season. He has spent much of the off season working on his fitness under a new trainer, Gil Reyes, and his game has clearly benefited. Equally significantly, Agassi has cut

the showmanship from his game.

He will still go for the spectacular if he can, but his businesslike approach is more businesslike than last year. Agassi said: "A lot fitter and a lot tougher mentally. If the guys are going to beat me, they're starting to realize they are going to have to work."

The only lapse in a near flawless performance by Agassi came in the fourth set. Broken early, he simply let the set go, which seemed a dangerous tactic against someone of Edberg's class. As it turned out, his carelessness was not exploited. When Agassi applied the pressure in the fourth set, Edberg crumbled again, serving double-faults to lose each of his first two service games.

"Last year, Edberg would have been very confident going into the fourth set," Agassi added, "because he would have been thinking 'All I have to do is bang in there and he'll get tired'. That's not the case this year. I've only just scratched the surface. I can be a lot fitter than I am now."

RESULTS: Men's singles: Final: A Agassi (US) 6-1, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2, 6-2; 1st runner-up: S Edberg (SWE) 6-1, 6-4, 6-1, 6-2, 6-2; 2nd runner-up: B Gilbert (USA) 6-4, 6-2, 6-2, 6-2, 6-2; 3rd runner-up: E Sanchez (ESP) 6-4, 6-2, 6-2, 6-2, 6-2; 4th runner-up: Y Lendl (AUT) 6-4, 6-2, 6-2, 6-2, 6-2.

ICE HOCKEY

Two saturation raids by Bombers

By Norman de Mesquita

THE HEINEKEN League regular season was completed at the weekend with the last six first division matches tying up the loose ends.

They showed that Cleveland Bombers, with two double-figure wins, are in excellent form as they prepare for the play-offs. A number of spectacular individual feats were the highlights of those games.

Kevin Conway scored 14 goals and six assists to take his total points to 188 and Timothy Cranston amassed 12 goals and six assists to take his total to 163 points.

Andre Malo, without doubt the outstanding defenceman in

the division, had a goal and 17 assists for a total of 121 points, which took him into ninth position in the individual scoring chart.

At the other end of the table, Lee Valley Lions were once again beaten heavily and took their goals against to an embarrassing 349 in 32 games. As for the loose ends to be tied up in pool D of the world championships, which ended in Cardiff on Sunday night, Great Britain dominated the group in nearly every department.

The only one in which either of the countries was able to shine was in goalkeeping and Damian Holland, who per-

formed such heroics in the Australian net, was voted the best goalkeeper of the week.

Tony Hand, who scored six goals and seven assists, was voted the best forward in the competition and Stephen Cooper the best defenceman.

Thirty-two of Great Britain's 57 goals were scored by 11 different players and the reunited Ian Cooper, Anthony and Stephen Johnson line topped them all with 18 goals and 14 assists.

RESULTS: Heineken League, first division: Cleveland Bombers 14, Sheffield Steelers 7; Swindon Wildcats 6, Telford Tigers 3; Trafford Metros 6, Huddersfield Seahawks 3; Cleveland Bombers 15, Telford Tigers 6; Huddersfield Seahawks 3, Sheffield Steelers 6; Lee Valley Lions 2, Telford Tigers 12.

Gulliver's travails and travels

By Alex Ramsey

ACCORDING to Bill Gulliver, running the London Marathon is the easy part. It is not the sort of statement you expect to hear from someone preparing to take on the 26-mile slog around London's streets.

But for Gulliver, aged 54, the experienced runner of many a marathon from New York to St Albans, the main part of the Varnes charity, marriage guidance and bereavement counselling, and blind to boot, lining up at the start alongside 30,000 athletes signals the end of months of hard work.

"It is very important that I take part in the marathon whenever I can because each time I am running for important causes and charities," he says. "Actually getting into the race, putting on my bib and carrying Mount Everest on your shoulders. Running is the easiest part."

THE TIMES
UNISYS
ADT London
Marathon Appeal

— It's like running on air all the way round.

This year, as one of The Times and Unisys entrants, Gulliver will be raising money for REAP — the Reading Emergency Accommodation Project. The charity runs a night shelter offering food, beds and rehabilitation for the homeless and is trying to buy and equip a halfway house to help the homeless to cope on their own. Once they have found permanent accommodation.

Gulliver and his wife, Pam, who is also blind, devote most of their time and energies to a wide range of charitable causes through their own organization, Varnes. Standing for Voluntary Agency Reading Versatile Emergency Agency Services, the Gullivers network is a collection agency for everything from coats to books to old cookers. In training for his third London Marathon, Gulliver is irritated by most people's response to his achievements.

"When I tell people what I have done, they are amazed," he said. "They tell me they couldn't run a marathon and they're not even blind. People see me as blind first and an athlete second."

Gulliver has to run with two escorts to steer him through the crowds in the London Marathon but, unlike some other blind athletes, he is not physically tied to them. "They just push me left or right to get me past," he said. But on training runs he sometimes goes unaccompanied. At well over 5ft and running with a white stick, he is hard to miss. "But I bump into people quite often," he said.

Once while training in the Reading University grounds,



The blind man who leads the sighted: Gulliver, a giant in a field of 30,000, laces up for action

one of his favourite haunts, he careered into a group of bystanders, flattening two and knocking over a third. "But they didn't say anything. They thought by keeping quiet I wouldn't know where they were. Even when I spoke in them they still kept quiet."

Gulliver finds that this is a common reaction after such accidents. On more than one occasion people have taken a silent swing at him rather than apologize or help. But he warned: "I'm very quick. Once I hear them move I can catch them and then I've got them."

Constant collisions have in the past eroded Gulliver's confidence. "It's not just the fright but the thought of what could have been," he said. He decided to seek professional advice to see if there were any gadgets or devices to help him avoid the great British public as he ran. There was none. "But," he said, "they suggested I wear a large white T-shirt with 'I am a blind runner' written on the front."

His other sporting passions are tennis and archery. A bell inside the tennis ball tells him where the ball is. "It's fine provided there is spin on the ball," Gulliver said. "But some of the ladies I play against hit the ball very flat and the ball remains static inside, so they often beat me."

He is also working with the engineering department of Reading University to build a system of sensors and sonic devices to give him a more accurate picture of the court.

Gulliver will try anything once. When the British Paralympic Association refused to let him jump because he was blind, the Royal Green Jackets offered to take him up instead. Never one to miss an opportunity to raise money for charity, Gulliver completed his 10,000ft free-fall jump for the Orlando Fund to send sick children to Disneyworld in Florida. "I don't do these things for self-aggrandizement, but there is a

certain curiosity about my being blind and it helps publicity for the charities."

"Pam and I don't want to get to the end of our lives and look back across a void, a desert. Being blind can be an advantage. When we achieve our goals there is a certain incredulity from the public. We feel we have to be seen to be proving ourselves."

The Times and Unisys — the official ADT London Marathon computer service — hope that by featuring the efforts of our 12 fund runners we will help them find sponsorship. If you wish to support one or more of them, write clearly stating your beneficiaries to The Times/Unisys London Marathon Appeal, Sports Department, The Times, Virginia Street, London E1 9XN. We will send you your donation.

Unisys is offering a Unisys personal computer to the biggest fund-raiser of our 12 and a jumbo ham and magnum of champagne respectively to the second and third largest.

STUDENT SPORT

Handsome double for Scots diver

By Mike Lamb

PETER Smith, the Scotland international, who is studying at Jordanhill College, took the highboard and springboard diving championships at Leeds over the weekend.

Winning both events with a handsome margin, Smith left Erwin Cunniff, from the College of Ripon and York St John, as the only British student diver to win both titles in the British students' diving championships at Leeds over the weekend.

Winning both events with a handsome margin, Smith left Erwin Cunniff, from the College of Ripon and York St John, as the only British student diver to win both titles in the British students' diving championships at Leeds over the weekend.

RESULTS: Men's Highboard: 1. P. Smith (Jordanhill Coll., 200.00), 2. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 150.00), 3. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 140.00), 4. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 130.00), 5. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 120.00). Women's Highboard: 1. J. Booth (Loughborough Univ., 176.00), 2. K. Johnson (Nottingham Polytechnic, 161.70), 3. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 150.00), 4. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 140.00), 5. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 130.00).

RESULTS: Men's Freestyle: 1. A. Flapley (Grange and Alport Coll., 24.50), 2. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 23.50), 3. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 22.50), 4. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 21.50), 5. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 20.50). Women's Freestyle: 1. J. Booth (Loughborough Univ., 176.00), 2. K. Johnson (Nottingham Polytechnic, 161.70), 3. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 150.00), 4. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 140.00), 5. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 130.00).

RESULTS: Men's Springboard: 1. J. Booth (Loughborough Univ., 176.00), 2. K. Johnson (Nottingham Polytechnic, 161.70), 3. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 150.00), 4. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 140.00), 5. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 130.00).

RESULTS: Women's Springboard: 1. J. Booth (Loughborough Univ., 176.00), 2. K. Johnson (Nottingham Polytechnic, 161.70), 3. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 150.00), 4. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 140.00), 5. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 130.00).

RESULTS: Men's Synchronised: 1. J. Booth (Loughborough Univ., 176.00), 2. K. Johnson (Nottingham Polytechnic, 161.70), 3. S. Morrison (UNWCC, 150.00), 4. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 140.00), 5. J. Cunniff (Ripon and York St John Coll., 130.00).

01-481 1066

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS

01-481 1066

County Secretary

£39,441-£43,389

We have decided to establish a County Secretary's Department to cover all legal and central administrative aspects of the Council's work. Heading the Department and as a member of the Chief Officers' Management Team, the County Secretary will have an outstanding opportunity to contribute significantly to the future development and strategy of the County Council.

A legal background and qualification is essential and you will also need to demonstrate exceptional management and leadership skills gained at the highest level. The post is based in Northallerton, a market town within easy reach of some of Britain's finest countryside, including the Yorkshire Dales and North Yorkshire Moors National Parks.

Further details and application forms, returnable by 5.4.90, available from the Personnel Section, Chief Executive's Department, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 9AD.

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

English Heritage

SENIOR MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT TO £26,900

English Heritage is England's main national body responsible for heritage conservation. It secures the preservation of the country's architectural and archaeological heritage and promotes the public's enjoyment and knowledge of this through the management of more than 350 historic properties in its care.

We are looking for an intelligent and enthusiastic accountant to head a team of seven staff, including three qualified accountants, who are responsible for the regular provision of financial information to management at all levels within the organisation which employs some 1,600 staff.

The post holder would take the lead in the preparation of the annual budget and have a major input to the corporate planning process. Applicants should be qualified accountants, with at least two years relevant post-qualification experience. The post is currently based in London.

Benefits include an index-linked non-contributory pension scheme and an interest free season ticket loan. Performance related pay could take your salary to £31,000.

For further details and an application form please contact:

Jessie Mayers,
Personnel Branch
6th Floor
18 Great Marlborough Street,
London W1V 1AF

Closing date: 20 April 1990.

ACCA

EDUCATION OFFICER

The Chartered Association of Certified Accountants is the professional body of over 113,000 members and students, in 120 countries of the world. It has a particular responsibility to ensure that the next generation of professional accountants has the knowledge and skills for the changing circumstances in which it will operate.

In order to further the development and implementation of the Association's education policy, a second Education Officer is to be appointed. The post holder will become involved in all aspects of the Education Department's work - assessing qualifications, liaising with students, teachers and examiners on aspects of the Association's examinations, compiling statistics, visiting colleges and contributing to the development of policy on the introduction of new methods of assessment.

The successful applicant, who should be a non-smoker, will be based in the Association's headquarters in London but, once familiar with the work, a small amount of travelling within the UK will be required. Salary will be in the range of £11,500 - £12,500 p.a. inclusive of London Weighting Allowance.

Further details and an application form can be obtained from:

The Secretary's Office
The Chartered Association
of Certified Accountants
29 Lincoln's Inn Fields
London WC2A 3EE
Tel: 01-242 8655

The closing date for completed applications is 5 April 1990.

LEGAL

SOLICITOR/DEPUTY CLERK

£24,000 to £26,000 + Car + Benefits

Following an organisational review we are seeking a qualified and suitably experienced solicitor/barrister as head of the Council's legal services and to fulfil the role of Deputy Clerk.

West Oxfordshire is an active authority and one which relies on competent officers capable of taking decisions and providing sound advice.

Your role will involve you in the whole spectrum of the legal intricacy of local authority work including business transactions, Court work, Planning Inquiries, Committee support and operational management.

To match our expectations you will need to be a self starter with a hands on approach (no prima donnas) and possess the flair and competence that gives you instant credibility.

If you've got the flavour and wish to taste, send for an information pack to the Personnel Officer, West Oxfordshire District Council, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon OX8 5NB.

Telephone: 0993 702941 x 2285

West Oxfordshire

"TIMES CHANGE AND WE CHANGE WITH THEM"

CAN YOU MEET THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE?

Solicitors (up to c.£39,500 a year)

Legal Executive (up to c.£15,500 a year)

Articled Clerk (up to c.£11,000 a year)

GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL HIGHER ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

£23,554 - £27,751 per annum

The General Medical Council is the regulatory body for the medical profession. Applications are invited for the above post, in the Conduct and Health Division, to be head of the Health Section and Secretary of the Health Committee, dealing with cases of unfitness to practise medicine.

Candidates should be graduates with a minimum of six years' relevant experience in public administration. The ability to communicate well, both orally and in writing, is essential. Experience of servicing committees would be an advantage.

For further information please contact:

Personnel Division
General Medical Council
44 Hatten Street, London W1N 6AE
Tel: 01 580 7642 (Ext. 2133)

Closing date for completed applications: 6th April 1990.

Essex

Estates Section

ENGINEER (BUILDING SERVICES)

£21,733 - £20,469 per annum (incl. rev.)

Applications are invited for the above post from suitably qualified Engineers previously corporate members of either the Chartered Institution of Building Engineers or the Institution of Electrical Engineers.

Applicants will be expected to have had recent experience in the design and maintenance of electrical and mechanical services in a large building complex using both a direct labour force and external contractors and consultants.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the cost effective operation of building services in the University's premises, together with managerial responsibility for a small team of craftsmen.

Assistance is available with relocation, removal and house purchase.

Applications (in triplicate) including a curriculum vitae and the names and addresses of three referees should be sent to the Personnel Unit, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ by Friday 6 April 1990. Further particulars of this post may be obtained by telephoning Colchester (0206) 872462/124 hours.

THE COUNCIL OF LEGAL EDUCATION THE INNS OF COURT SCHOOL OF LAW COURSE DIRECTOR OF BAR VOCATIONAL COURSE

Applications are invited for the post of Course Director of the new Bar Vocational Course. The appointment will be at Principal Lecturer level, and will involve responsibility for all aspects of the administration and continuing development of the course.

In addition to having a good honours degree and experience of professional practice and/or skills training, applicants should be able to show appropriate administrative and managerial experience.

The present salary scale for Principal Lecturers is £27,065 to £33,420 p.a. (including a London Allowance of £1,767 p.a.)

The appointment will be from 1st September 1990, or earlier by agreement.

Further details are available from the Sub-Dean, The Council of Legal Education, 4 Gray's Inn Place, London WC1R 5DX (Tel: 01-404-5787).

The closing date is Friday 20th April 1990.

Choicely-bred fillies to collect for Wragg

By Mandarin (Michael Phillips)

A DOUBLE for the Newmarket trainer Geoff Wragg and his new stable jockey Gary Carter looks a distinct possibility at Leicester today with *Vote In Favour* (2.0) and *Casamurrae* (4.5).

Both are beautifully-bred fillies who could well end up outcontending much better races later in the season than those that confront them now.

Vote In Favour, my selection for the Keythorpe Maiden Stakes, is by General Assembly out of *Favourite* who is by *River Ridge* out of *Favourite*, the winner of the Irish 1,000 Guineas in 1971.

This is the famous female family tracing back to *Horama* that served the Moller brothers so well for so long.

Following the death of Eric Moller, the vast majority of his bloodstock was bought last autumn by Sheikh Mohammed, whose colours *Vote In Favour* will carry this afternoon.

In her only race last year, she was a creditable second to the more experienced *Pin Sing* on today's race in November. With that experience behind her she should be capable of going one better in this company.

Her stable companion *Casamurrae*, who is my choice to win the Harborough Fillies Stakes, is very closely related to her owner Sir Philip Oppenheimer's 1982 1,000 Guineas

winner, *On The House*.

In the second of her two races last season, which was also on the same midland track, *Casamurrae* was beaten a head only by *Surpassing*. She should only have to give a repeat performance this afternoon to gain a coveted victory.

On the jumping front at Sandown Park, another double for Martin Pipe and Peter Scudamore looks on the cards, thanks to *The Leggett* (2.15) and *Torside* (3.50).

Once it would have been foolhardy to oppose *Kilbrannigan Castle* in a race such as this, but *Right O' The Line* Handicap Chase as *Fulke Walwyn's* old war horse has accumulated 11 victories on the track. Last time out, however, it looked as though the sparkle of days gone by was missing. I much prefer *The Leggett*, who has been in fine form all this season as his form figures clearly indicate.

Torside, my selection for the Vici Alanbrooke Memorial Chase, returned to form at Newton Abbot 13 days ago when fitted with blinkers for the first time.

Not surprisingly, he will be wearing them again this afternoon when his most dangerous rival would appear to be *Membersco*, who was winning for the fourth time on the Esher course when accounting



Springholm, seen winning at Newbury for Richard Dunwoody despite an untidy jump at the last, is strongly fancied to capture the Royal Ordnance Chase at Sandown

Cecil's colt out to 10-1 for Guineas

By George Rae

BE MY CHIEF is out to 10-1 with *Hills* for the 2,000 Guineas amid rumours that it is not well with him.

The colt, unbeaten in six starts last season, was deserted by backers throughout yesterday. "We simply cannot take a penny for him," spokesman Graham Sharpe said.

These sentiments were echoed by most bookmakers as *Be My Chief's* stock fell. Although neither *Ladbrokes* nor *Corals* went as far as *Hills*, both quote at 8-1 to the face of universal apathy.

However, Henry Cecil, *Be My Chief's* trainer, was quick to dismiss rumours that something was wrong. "There is nothing wrong with the horse at all," he said. "Be My Chief is working well and has not suffered a setback."

As *Be My Chief* weakened, *Machivellian* hardened as favourite and is now as low as 13-8 with *Corals*. The *Francois Boutin*-trained colt, officially rated the best two-year-old in Europe last season, has been in constant demand since a sparkling gallop at Chantilly last week.

He is scheduled to reappear in the Prix de la Forêt, a recognized classic trial, at Maisons-Laffitte on April 10.

On the Grand National front, *Hills* report backing for David Elsworth's *Chofar*, the Hennessy Gold Cup winner. He is now 20-1 from 25-1.

Derby boy *Blas De France*, trained by Jean-Marie Bégouin, has his first serious workout at Chantilly today. He is likely to appear in the Prix de la Forêt at Maisons-Laffitte on April 22.

Tudor Romance extends Eckley's excellent record

Malcolm Eckley extended a remarkable record when Tudor Romance won the Kingfisher Handicap at Leicester yesterday.

The five-year-old has been running over hurdles and has weekly treatment for respiratory and throat problems, but he brought off a gamble on this first appearance on the flat for Eckley.

Tudor Romance was backed from 20-1 to 12-1 and took up the running going into the final furlong. He was immediately challenged by *Tongue Tied* Johnny but held the top weight at the end by three-quarters of a length.

Nicky Carlisle was in good form, winning the first two events on Miss El Arab and Moor Frolicking to complete a 13-1 double.

Carlisle, who is retained as second jockey to Tom Jones's Newmarket stable, had a few rides to all-weather Flat events this winter, but did not manage a winner.

Moor Frolicking fared better on the artificial surface, scoring at Lingfield for Guildford trainer 'Buck' Jones, who went through last year's Flat turf season without a winner.

Carlisle made every yard of the running in the Billesdon Selling Handicap on Moor Frolicking, who had to wait until July for his only win on the flat last year, was soon off the mark this campaign. The Presto-trained saddle Miss El Arab, a 14-1 winner of the Knighton Malice Auction

Stakes. The filly gave her owner Michael Graham his first success in seven years owning races.

Miss El Arab and the favourite, *Simble's Special*, drew away from their field in the last furlong, with Miss El Arab always having the edge over Reg Hollinshead's charge, winning by a neck.

Alston fancied the Irish-bred *Miss El Arab*. He reported: "She has been working well with my Brookley Stakes runner Northern Nation. Pat Eddery told me he thought Northern was riding her well and had won the Doncaster race but for missing the break."

The East Fife trainer Richard Hannoo opened his account in the new season with the two-year-old City Solace in the Headcorn Graduation Stakes at Folkestone.

The Last Tycoon colt ran green early but lost quickened well under Brian Ross inside the final furlong to beat Prince Jettina by a length.

Jack Berry's fancied Kummel King, who opened favourite, was ridden out of order after spreading a plate down at the start. That left just five runners with City Solace returned the even money favourite.

Hannoo said of the winner, who cost 18,000 guineas: "He's a nice sort and might have won even with Kummel King in the race."

Veteran White Paper steals show with sprightly display

Point-to-point by Brian Beel

THE STAR performer of Saturday's 13 point-to-point meetings was undoubtedly 18-year-old White Paper, who made every yard of the running and won superbly to win the open race, under Robert Elwell, at the VWH.

White Paper's first win was an Irish hurdle in 1978 and since then he has had 26 other successes, 24 of which have been in point-to-points. His time on Saturday was even faster than that of Lefrak City, the winner of the RMC ladies' qualifier, who was carrying 21lb less.

Riding honours went to Philip Schofield with his treble at the Lamerham which included the open John Sans, returning to the winning enclosure after going under by half a length in the adjacent race at Overy St Mary last week.

There were no takers on the Tote for the winner of the adjacent race at this meeting, *Woolf*, ridden by Ian Foale, even though the starting price returned was only 9-1.

Alison Dare, who rode her 100th winner the previous Saturday, set off for the second century in good style at the South Devon where she won the Audi qualifier on Fennelly and in the ladies' open Mendip Express. The open race winner here, Charles Lumsden's *Amal Lees* Hope, had his last success five years ago to a hurdle race, but

the style of his victory under Tim Stephenson suggests that it is unlikely the wait for his next will be as long.

The Brookshaw stable continues in invincible form in the North West. A crackle at the Meynell and South Staffs was shared by Steven Brookshaw on Mount Arns in the open and Konrad Wolf in the adjacent and by Stephanie Baxter, who rode the easy winner of the ladies' race, *Valgaris*.

Another stable to form is that of Robert Alner. At the Weston and Barnwell, the trainer-ride continued his run of success with *Ever Season* and *Gunner's* Flight taking the open and restricted respectively. Polly Curlew landed a gamble on *Fastoral* Pride, backed to 5-4 favourite, and followed up later on *Columbine* in the maiden.

Vivique justified market support in the Audi qualifier at the Llandelilo Farmers but was pressed all the way to the line by Suikubos where only half a length separated them. The 1988 Times Champion final winner, St Helens Boy, proved no match in the open for Timber Tool who extended his winning run to six for Tim Rooney, four of these being this season.

On a day when five out of six favourites obliged at the Euston, the sole non-favourite to oblige was the 7-4 chance Darrington deal who initiated the first leg of a double for Nigel Bloom, later completed by Spartan Sprite in the maiden.

Mike Felton looked to be following up his success on Sutoro Prince the members, but he was out of order after approaching the last fence in the Land Rover qualifier at the Wilton. However, disaster loomed when Beechwood Grove fell leaving Nick Mitchell on the favourite, Master Hardy, 20 lengths clear of his nearest rival, *St. George*.

At the last meeting here, three weeks ago, 93 horses started but the firm going on Saturday reduced the number to only 26. Chris Coyne caused a 33-1 surprise at the Hampshire on Bishop's Blaize in the maiden, the best race of the day at this meeting. After making all the running, Bishop's Blaize ran on to the St. George's Cup, won with Synonymous only a neck away in third place.

There was a drop in class for Sweet Rascal, the winner of the members at the Currie at 7-1 on, her previous outing being in the Currie Foxhunting at Cheltenham. The experienced horses of this class to run in such races both reduces the number of runners and, for the spectators, instills little more excitement than that of a walk-over.

Results from yesterday's three meetings

Leicester

Going: good to firm

2.0 (5) 1. MISS EL ARAB (N. Carlisle, 14-1) 2. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 3. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 4. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 5. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 6. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 7. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 8. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 9. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 10. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 11. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 12. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 13. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 14. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 15. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 16. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 17. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 18. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 19. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 20. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 21. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 22. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 23. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 24. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 25. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 26. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 27. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 28. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 29. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 30. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 31. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 32. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 33. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 34. *Woolf* (I. Foale, 9-1) 35. *Woolf* (I. 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